SPIDER-MAN'S 30TH ANNIVERSARY
MARVEL COMICS
MARVEL AGE
APPROVED BY THE COMICS CODE AUTHORITY
$1.00 US
$1.25 CAN
114
JULY
UK 70p
30TH ANNIVERSARY 1962 1992
THE AMAZING SPIDER-MAN
BAGGS '92 ROMITA

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Caught in the Web

Spider-Man got an awful lot of us into comics.

Not just readers — the web-slinger seems to be responsible for an incredible number of professionals working in the field today. This became increasingly evident as we pulled this issue of MARVEL AGE together. Spidey hooked a tremendous number of readers on comics their first time around, and many of those folks commented that, even though they drifted away from comics for a while, some new exposure to Spidey brought them *back*.

One of my own most vivid memories is that of my first Spidey encounter. I remember AMAZING SPIDER-MAN #19, "Spidey Strikes Back!" It had everything — great villains, a guest shot by the Torch, and JJJ beating his head against a brick wall because his latest attempt to discredit the web-spinner had failed. To this day it strikes me as one of Stan & Steve's most brilliant efforts. I was hooked and, luckily for me, I never left.

You'll see a common thread running through a lot of the comments over the course of the anniversary celebration — that it's Spidey's *human* qualities that always do the trick. While people like the super hero, they *love* the guy inside the suit, because he's *them*. He's the reader in some guise or another.

That's why so many of the writers consider a Spider-Man assignment to be the golden ring, and why so many other writers incorporate Spidey into the books they write. Spidey isn't just good marketing; he's the character everyone wants to take a shot at and, luckily for them, he's one of the best team-up characters comics have ever seen.

All this has me curious. Does Spidey still affect readers the way he did back when I scanned the local comic book racks at Walters' Newsstand in Morgantown, WV? Do you still get the rush to see Pete swinging through the night air, only to be dive-bombed by the Hobgoblin or the Vulture or Doc Ock?

Over the next six months, from now 'til the end of the year, I want you to join in the celebration by writing letters to ***Marvel Age***, and to the Spider-Man titles. Heck, write your congressman. Maybe we'll get a statue of the amazing arachnid erected in Washington!

Let's face it, we're a select group. We read, we stretch our imaginations, and we allow ourselves to enjoy the fantastic, just for the sake of pure pleasure. So let's hear what Spider-Man means to you. What kind of special joy do you get from his offbeat adventures? Share the experience.

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ITEM! 1992 marks Spider-Man's 30th anniversary, and Marvel's not about to let this milestone go by without a bang. This summer's Spider-Man annuals will feature a special four part crossover story entitled, "The Hero Killers." In this story, super heroes start disappearing off the streets of New York. When Speedball becomes one of them, Spidey teams up with the New Warriors to learn why.

But before they can find out, they must battle a bevy of bad guys, including; the Rhino, Boomerang, Stiletto, Discus, Bombshell, Speed Demon, Blacklash, Beetle, Hydroman, the Sphinx, the Dreadnoughts, and the all new evil Super-Dreadnoughts. "The Hero Killers" is written by Spidey fan favorite David Michelinie and penciled by hot newcomer Scott (Daredevil) McDaniels. This crossover kicks off in June with AMAZING SPIDER-MAN ANNUAL #26, continues in SPECTACULAR SPIDER-MAN ANNUAL #12, part 3 in WEB OF SPIDER-MAN ANNUAL #8 and concludes in NEW WARRIORS ANNUAL #2 in July.

ITEM! GHOST RIDER fans have been demanding the permanent return of John Blaze, the *original* Ghost Rider, ever since his appearance in GHOST RIDER #13. In June, Marvel Comics presents the most eagerly awaited premiere of the season, John Blaze starring with Ghost Rider in SPIRITS OF VENGEANCE #1! Written by fan favorite Howard Mackie (GHOST RIDER, WEB OF SPIDER-MAN) with art by Adam Kubert, this number 1 will be sold as a special collector's edition, complete with polybagging and fold out poster!

The story begins at the Quentin Carnival, a traveling show Blaze owns. Since freeing himself from the curse of being the Ghost Rider, Blaze has tried to live a normal life free from the supernatural. But Blaze has become a focal point of magic: a magnet attracting evil demons. When these demons kidnap his son, Blaze enlists the Ghost Rider to help find him. By the end of the story, Blaze realizes that he can never escape his dark past and dedicates himself to fighting these evil demons. Armed with a mystical motorcycle and hellfire-shooting sawed-off shotgun, Blaze and his crew of colorful carnies travel from town to town, performing and battling unearthly horrors.

SPIRITS OF VENGEANCE #1 is the second part of the "Rise of the Midnight Sons" crossover begun in GHOST RIDER #28 (also available in June). This six part multi-book crossover introduces four brand new horror/supernatural titles to the Marvel Universe: SPIRITS OF VENGEANCE, MORBIUS THE LIVING VAMPIRE, DARKHOLD: PAGES FROM THE BOOK OF SINS and NIGHT-STALKERS. Check out the crossover checklist in this issue for the complete crossover breakdown.

Like SPIRITS OF VENGEANCE, each of these books will come with a fold-out poster. We aren't supposed to give anything away, but we can say that if fans were to put these six posters together, they might discover something *very interesting!*

Representing a bold foray into the horror/supernatural genre, these books, all edited by Bobbie Chase, create a microverse within the Marvel Universe. All of these books will maintain a separate continuity and gritty, hard-edged style very similar to that of their parent book, GHOST RIDER. In fact, they've been referred to as the "Ghost Rider Family."

Next month, in a great new format, MARVEL AGE #115 presents a special "Rise of the Midnight Sons" edition, an issue dedicated to this hot new crossover!

ITEM! The Slug, Justin Hammer, Wolfgang Strucker, Fenris, Bushwacker, Tombstone, Mr. Tolliver, Deadpool and the Hand: a group of the meanest, toughest, slimiest villains in the Marvel Universe. Now that the Kingpin has been defeated, they're fighting each other for control of his empire. To settle their differences peacefully, they agree to meet in Las Vegas and hold a "crime convention." Their convention is cut short, however, by the unexpected appearances of Daredevil, the Punisher and Nomad.

"Dead Man's Hand" is a nine part crossover extravaganza taking place in DAREDEVIL, NOMAD and THE PUNISHER WAR JOURNAL. For this special event, each part of the story is referred to as a "hand," as in a "hand of cards." So, "part 1" will be called, "first hand."

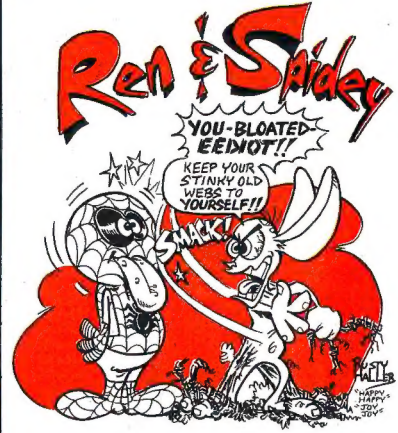
When Daredevil, the Punisher and Nomad team up, there's no telling if they'll spend more time battling the bad guys or each other. It's been well established that Daredevil and the Punisher have never seen eye-to-eye on how to fight crime, and Nomad has always been an enigma. Fans will see just how much these three wild cards differ, and how well they get along.

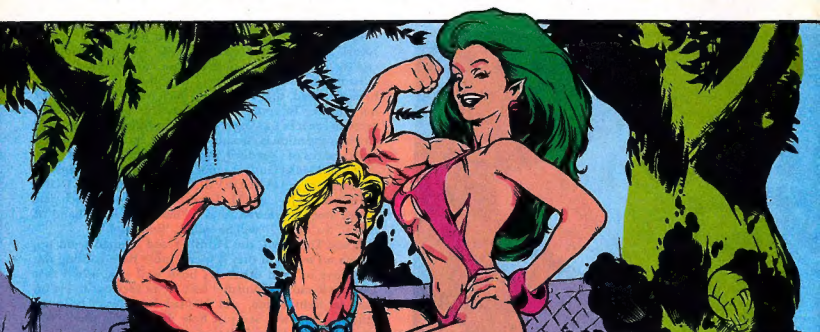
PUNISHER editor Don Daley promises that sparks will be flying, "It wouldn't bother the Punisher any if Daredevil got hurt. The Punisher never got over the death of his own kids, so when Nomad shows up with Bucky, the Punisher gets real tense. And you know what happens when he gets tense!"

This crossover will also give fans a chance to learn more about Nomad. NOMAD editor Glenn Herdling says, "We've always known that the Punisher and Daredevil have vastly different philosophies toward criminals. Now we get the chance to see how Nomad sort-of wanders somewhere between their two philosophies."

"Dead Man's Hand" begins in June. To help you keep track, here's how it breaks down:

First hand	DAREDEVIL #307
Second hand	NOMAD #4
Third hand	PUNISHER WAR JOURNAL #45
Fourth hand	DAREDEVIL #308
Fifth hand	NOMAD #5
Sixth hand	PUNISHER WAR JOURNAL #46
Seventh hand	DAREDEVIL #309
Eighth hand	NOMAD #6
Ninth hand	PUNISHER WAR JOURNAL #47





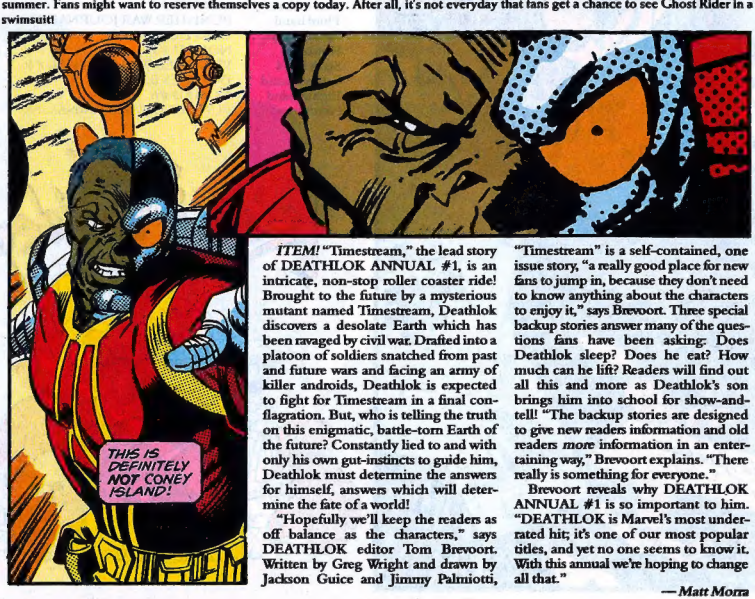
ITEM! The MARVEL SWIMSUIT SPECIAL is back! This year's magazine special features *twice* the number of pinups as last year, half a dozen two-page spreads, advertisement parodies and a roster of the best artists working in comics today!

Jim Lee, Rob Liefeld, Marc Silvestri, Whilce Portacio, Joe Jusko, Larry Stroman, George Perez, John Romita Jr., Dale Keown, Walt Simonson, Alan Davis, Andy Kubert and Mike Mignola are just some of the artists creating swimsuited scenes of Marvel's most popular super heroes. She-Hulk, Rogue, Meggan, Psylocke, Mary Jane, Polaris and the Black Cat will be there in all their bathing suited best, as will Cyclops, Thor, Gambit, Nomad, Madrox, Colossus and, of course, Spider-Man! These and many other surprise guests will spend their summer vacation in Wakanda for the hottest event of the year!

T'Challa, the Black Panther, has invited every hero in the Marvel Universe to his small African nation to help him celebrate his wedding engagement. He's even granted amnesty to many super villains, so you never know who might show up! Our heroes will be swimming, sunbathing, sailing, water-skiing, fishing and diving in a beautiful tropical paradise of deep blue lakes, lush green forests and snow white sands. In short, it's beach blanket bingo Wakandan style!

Fan feedback from last year's issue was overwhelming. In response to their many letters, this year's edition will contain no articles at all. Instead, the emphasis will be on the spectacular artwork and the outrageous ads in this forty-eight page event.

The MARVEL SWIMSUIT SPECIAL editor Bobbie Chase promises that fans will get exactly what they asked for: more art and less talk. The MARVEL SWIMSUIT SPECIAL hits the newsstands this June, and could very well turn out to be the hottest thing of the summer. Fans might want to reserve themselves a copy today. After all, it's not everyday that fans get a chance to see Ghost Rider in a swimsuit!



ITEM! "Timestream," the lead story of DEATHLOK ANNUAL #1, is an intricate, non-stop roller coaster ride! Brought to the future by a mysterious mutant named Timestream, Deathlok discovers a desolate Earth which has been ravaged by civil war. Drafted into a platoon of soldiers snatched from past and future wars and facing an army of killer androids, Deathlok is expected to fight for Timestream in a final conflagration. But, who is telling the truth on this enigmatic, battle-torn Earth of the future? Constantly lied to and with only his own gut-instincts to guide him, Deathlok must determine the answers for himself, answers which will determine the fate of a world!

"Hopefully we'll keep the readers as off balance as the characters," says DEATHLOK editor Tom Brevoort. Written by Greg Wright and drawn by Jackson Guice and Jimmy Palmiotti, "Timestream" is a self-contained, one issue story, "a really good place for new fans to jump in, because they don't need to know anything about the characters to enjoy it," says Brevoort. Three special backup stories answer many of the questions fans have been asking: Does Deathlok sleep? Does he eat? How much can he lift? Readers will find out all this and more as Deathlok's son brings him into school for show-and-tell! "The backup stories are designed to give new readers information and old readers *more* information in an entertaining way," Brevoort explains. "There really is something for everyone."

Brevoort reveals why DEATHLOK ANNUAL #1 is so important to him. "DEATHLOK is Marvel's most underrated hit; it's one of our most popular titles, and yet no one seems to know it. With this annual we're hoping to change all that."

— Matt Morra

STAN'S SOAPBOX

Hi, Heroes!

So, I'm sitting at my desk minding my own business when the phone rings. "Hi, Stan, this is Steve Saffel," intones the mellifluous voice at the other end of the world.

Instantly I sit bolt upright. Saffel the Somber, he who majestically wears the mighty mantle of MARVEL AGE Editor, does not make frivolous phone calls. The tension mounts as I wait for his next momentous pronouncement. It doesn't take long.

"Our next MARVEL AGE will be an all-Spidey issue," spoketh he. "Therefore, I'd like a look behind the scenes from the days when you were developing the web-slinger. Show the lunacy that went into your collaborations. Make your Soapbox sort-of a 'Secret Origin of Spidey'."

So saying, he wished me luck and hung up the phone, undoubtedly going on to other Saffelian matters of which I know not.

So here I sit, fingers poised over my computer's keys, striving to prove worthy of so awesome an assignment.

Actually, the creation of Spider-Man happened in an odd sort of way. Marvel had already bestowed THE FANTASTIC FOUR and THE INCREDIBLE HULK on an eternally grateful public and now it was time to create another super hero. But what sort of power should he have? (Because a super hero without a super power is like Aunt May without an ailment!) We already had a teenager who could burst into flame and fly, a scientist whose body could stretch, a female who possessed the power of invisibility and a human fighting machine whose body looked like it was made of volcanic rock — not to mention a green-skinned monster whose legs were so powerful he could jump over a mountain! (A small mountain perhaps, but a mountain nevertheless!) So what else was left? What super power could I dream up that was totally different?

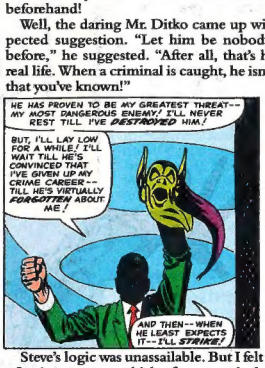
As I sat staring blankly at the wall, with the wall staring back, I noticed a fly buzzing around my head. After a few seconds it landed on the wall and crawled up to the ceiling. "Wow!" thunk I. "What if a super hero could crawl on walls like an insect?"

That was all it took. I was off and running. But I needed a name for my new hero. "Fly Man?" Nope, too juvenile. "Mosquito Man?" It didn't send me. "Insect Man?" Sounded icky. Then I remembered an old magazine series I read when I was a kid. It was called "The Spider, Master of Men!" Bingo! A spider! Spider-Man! Well, you know the rest.

One of the things about doing Spidey that was the most fun was working with the brilliant, magnificently creative Steve Ditko. He was, and still is, one of the few artists in the biz who has a style so unique you can recognize it anywhere. When I saw the first few sketches he made of Spider-Man I knew he was the perfect illustrator for the series. Thanks to Steve, Spidey never looked like any other hero. He was as unique and distinctive as any comic book character could possibly be. When Steve drew him as Peter Parker, he was just an ordinary, average-looking kid. But when the dazzlin' Mr. D put him in costume, everything about our wondrous web-slinger looked spidery, from the way he curved his fingers to the way his body moved, and who could forget the twisting and angling of his arms and legs? I used to suspect that ol' Steve undoubtedly kept a trained spider around to use for reference, but never could prove it!

We had fun — and we also had arguments. They were fun, too. I remember us once doing a series that involved a villain whose identity nobody knew. The series went on for months and finally we realized it was time to expose the dude. So we began to plan our wrap-up to reveal his identity to the readers. There was just one problem. Neither Steve nor I had any idea who he was! We had never figured it out beforehand!

Well, the daring Mr. Ditko came up with the most unexpected suggestion. "Let him be nobody we've ever seen before," he suggested. "After all, that's how it happens in real life. When a criminal is caught, he isn't always someone that you've known!"


HE HAS PROVEN TO BE MY GREATEST THREAT-- MY MOST DANGEROUS ENEMY! I'LL NEVER REST TILL I'VE DESTROYED HIM!
BUT, I'LL LAY LOW FOR A WHILE! I'LL WAIT TILL HE'S CONVINCED THAT I'VE GIVEN UP MY CRIME CAREER -- TILL HE'S VIRTUALLY FORGOTTEN ABOUT ME!
AND THEN-- WHEN HE LEAST EXPECTS IT-- I'LL STRIKE!

Steve's logic was unassailable. But I felt that, after months of trying to guess which of our story's characters the villain was, the readers would be disappointed if he turned out to be a total stranger. Disappointed? I was sure they'd want to clobber us.

To make a short story shorter, I finally prevailed. (Not because I convinced my capricious collaborator; just because I was also the editor!) But here's a confession: to this day I'm not sure that Steve wasn't right. If our villain had turned out to be someone never seen before, the readers would have been shocked, but they'd probably never have forgotten that startling development. That villain was the original Green Goblin.

Another thing sticks in my mind. I used to create and design all the sound effects that appeared in the strip. I also added the innumerable speed lines which I felt helped to liven up the action scenes. I was real proud of my little artistic contributions and always wondered why Steve never complimented me for dressing up the panels. Well, here's the punch line — it wasn't 'til years later that I learned that he hated speed lines and sound effects! I don't just mean hated — I mean HATED!

Hey, I could go on forever with these rollickin' reminiscences, but I don't want to get Sturdy Stevey all riled up again! (For all I know, he probably hated that nickname, too!) So I'll just close by saying, "Here's to you, S.D. You're a true original and I'm proud to have worked with you!" Or, as Uncle Ben would say, "Eheu fugaces labuntur anni!"

Excelsior!

Stan

— Stan Lee

WILLIE LUMPKIN

© 1992 by Stan Lee and Dan DeCarlo

LET'S SEARCH FOR PEE-WEE SCIENTIFICALLY! WHAT'S HIS FAVORITE FOOD?
CANDY!
SUPER MARKET
MEN
OKAY THEN, WHERE'S THE CANDY COUNTER?
WELL, FIRST YOU GO TOWARDS FROZEN FOODS...
THEN, TAKE THE SECOND DETOUR THRU DELICATESSEN.. OR IS IT SOAP FLAKES? NO, BETTER BEAR RIGHT AT FISH, AND...
HOLD IT, HOLD IT!
LEE and DeCARLO 7-4
WHAT'S HIS NEXT FAVORITE FOOD?

CONTEMPLATION OF A SPIDER TURNING 30

Thirty years after his debut in AMAZING FANTASY #15, Spider-Man appears in five monthly titles and his own comic strip running in more than 500 newspapers daily. In September a new Spider-Man title, SPIDER-MAN 2099, will explore the Spider-Man mythos one hundred years in the future.

With the multitude of super-characters around, what is it about Spider-Man that, after thirty years, still captures the hearts of millions of readers and brings them back, month after month?

"He's the regular guy super hero," said Danny Fingeroth, the current editor of the Spider-Man titles. "Spider-Man has always been driven by the character of Peter Parker." Whereas the civilian identities of most other heroes are lost when they don their tights, "Spider-Man is, first and foremost, Peter Parker. He brings all his problems, his worries about Aunt May and MJ, with him when he puts on the suit."

Blame It on the Bass Player

"I've always liked dealing with the person," said David Micheline, the author of THE AMAZING SPIDER-MAN since issue #296, making him the veteran of the current Spider-Man writers. "Peter Parker, with the suit on, is still Peter Parker." He went on to say of Spider-Man, "He's the character that got me back into comics." When David was 16 years old, he stopped reading comic books. "No one reads comics at 16," David reasoned. It wasn't until he turned 20 that his viewpoint changed. David was in college at the time and playing with a band. One day the bass player introduced David to his closet-full of comics. His enthusiasm for comic books, especially Spider-Man, convinced David to go to the local 7-11 and pick up the latest issue.

That issue pitted Spider-Man against Mysterio, but it wasn't the villain that got David re-hooked; it was Spider-Man. "He is a real person

"No matter what complications are thrown his way, he always retains his values."

with problems. He has a noble sensibility and a solid moral code." David identifies with the latter. "No matter what complications are thrown his way, he always retains his values."

With a laugh, David recalled one of his favorite issues. "I think it was the hundredth issue. Spidey ended up with six-arms. I thought, 'That's great. Here's this guy trying to keep a secret life, and now he's got six arms!'" And the death of Gwen Stacy, Peter Parker's first love, had a profound effect on David. "You never saw Lois Lane get killed," he observed.

David's biggest challenge, as the series' writer, stems from the fact that "Spider-Man is the hero most identified with Marvel Comics. He is so high profile," explained David, "that there is a great deal of interest with what is done with the character within all levels of the company, so you are under more scrutiny. When I was writing IRON MAN, I had free rein as to what was going to happen to the character."

So David's stamp is seen more in the dialogue, where he has "the most freedom," and where David likes to give Spider-Man a sense of humor. "I allow him to see the irony in his life."

With the recent Cardiac and Carnage/Venom storylines, David has not been able to focus as much on the supporting cast. This will change radically with THE AMAZING SPIDER-MAN's 30th anniversary issue (#265, shipping June), which will feature the Red Skull and revelations concerning two people in Peter Parker's life readers never expected to see again.

"To Hold, as T'were the Mirror Up to Nature."

J.M. DeMatteis, current scribe for THE SPECTACULAR SPIDER-MAN, is also drawn to the pervasive spirit of Peter Parker and the people in his life, although his approach is very different. "Of all the regular Marvel super hero characters, I'm always drawn back to Spider-Man."

"Peter Parker," he continued "is the last decent person left. Even when I'm burnt out on other characters, I find him interesting." DeMatteis feels Peter Parker's life has gotten better over the years. "He's no longer this neurotic guy who keeps trying to do his best but keeps coming up against obstacles," J.M. explained. "Now he's got a beautiful wife and no monetary problems. So I examine his psyche."

"Peter Parker is the last decent person left."

"I like to hook into a character and keep pushing." This is clearly evident in his approach to Kraven the Hunter in his acclaimed "Kraven's Last Hunt," which ran through all three Spider-Man titles several years back. "Here we have a villain who's been around for 25 years. Who is he? How did he get that way?"

"I like to write stories where the reader finds himself showing concern not only for the hero, but also the villain and everyone else." In his recent "Child Within" storyline, J.M. got "into Spider-Man, Vermin and Harry (Osborn)'s heads, and rooted around. I pushed the characters into new places, but always remained true to them."

"Left to my own devices," he continued, "I could have done five years of Harry and Vermin." Thus, there will be a follow up to the "Child Within" storyline. Before that though, J.M. will explore the reasons behind the Vulture's recent killing spree. This examination into the Vulture's psyche will be juxtaposed with certain revelations about Aunt May's character in a storyline entitled 'Funeral Arrangements.'"

"Aunt May's survived a heart attack and confrontations with Dr. Octopus and the Vulture, as well as experiencing the anguish of her husband, Ben and beau, Nathan Lubinsky's deaths," explained J.M. "She's an incredibly strong woman."

For the 30th anniversary issue of THE SPECTACULAR SPIDER-MAN (#189, which shipped April 28), J.M. will feature Green Goblin in what will be Spider-Man and the Goblin's final battle.

Sanity Clause

Howard Mackie, writer/architect of the recent GHOST RIDER revival, found "taking on a character that Stan wrote" an intimidating challenge. "While growing up, I followed Spider-Man's entire run," Howard explained. "It was the book that got me into comics, so when I was offered THE WEB OF SPIDER-MAN, it was like getting hit over the head with a bat."

Howard finds writing GHOST RIDER "easier, because you don't have to pay attention to thirty years of continuity." But Spider-Man's rich history also appeals to him. "Stan really had it nailed. He gave us this character who has grown logically over the years from a solid base."

While Spider-Man may be more challenging, he finds it a welcome change from "all that flaming skull stuff. Spider-Man helps keep me sane," he explained.

"While he is one of Marvel's greatest super heroes," Howard continued, "he is not a full-time super hero. Peter Parker is inundated with responsibilities, which remain with him when he is in the suit."

Howard isn't sure what mark he will make on THE WEB OF SPIDER-MAN as he is "still getting his feet wet," but believes that he will "bring in villains that are darker and grittier, to contrast with Spider-Man, who is very much an ordinary person with extraordinary powers."

"It was the book that got me into comics, so when I was offered THE WEB OF SPIDER-MAN, it was like getting hit over the head with a bat."

One of these villains is the demonic half of the Hobgoblin, who appeared in "The Name of the Rose" (#84-89). "I am working on a multi-part story that would involve the 'DemoGoblin' and guest star a certain flaming-skulled character." Howard also hinted at a future guest appearance by Daredevil, as Howard explores the void left when the Kingpin toppled.

In his 30th anniversary issue (THE WEB OF SPIDER-MAN #90, which shipped May 5), Howard will have Galactus appear and destroy all of Earth's heroes the first few pages.

Pump Up the Volume

"The Hulk is a dark portrayal of the psychological profile of Bruce Banner. Spider-Man is more lighthearted," said INCREDIBLE HULK author, Peter David, who wrote THE SPECTACULAR SPIDER-MAN a few years ago and will be writing SPIDER-MAN 2099, to debut in September. "The character of Peter Parker," Peter explained "is constantly having responsibilities hoisted onto him. Spider-Man gives Peter an incredible amount of freedom." Peter believes Spider-Man's greatest strength to be his anonymity. "In the suit, Peter can do anything. If his identity were revealed, that power would be taken away."

"...Everywhere the original Spidey zigs, SPIDER-MAN 2099 zags."

How does this compare with the character of SPIDER-MAN 2099? "It doesn't," said Peter. "If we wanted to do a series starring a character with the same psychological profile, background, powers, we would have done the original Spider-Man." Thus, "everywhere the original Spidey zigs, SPIDER-MAN 2099 zags." Peter chuckled and recalled one of the subheadings of the series bible he presented to Marvel for SPIDER-MAN 2099, a sub-heading titled "Reinventing the Wheel, or Someone Hand Me the Round Spoked Thing Over There."

So, whereas Peter Parker was originally shy and somewhat neurotic, Miguel, the civilian indentity of SPIDER-MAN 2099, is a confident smart ass. "A cross between Val Kilmer's character in 'Weird Science' and Hawkeye Pierce," as Peter described him.

"The original Spider-Man left his responsibilities when he donned the costume. Miguel takes on responsibilities that he cannot handle in his civilian guise."

As for the powers of SPIDER-MAN 2099, Peter described them as "almost horrific in how they manifest themselves. He can do everything a real spider can except shoot webbing out his butt."

Yet SPIDER-MAN 2099 "will still retain the sense of a Spider-Man story," said Editor Joey Cavalieri. "It will be a novel approach to the character, but one that people can relate to." The Marvel 2099 Universe may seem far different from the present, but, as Joey put it, "Marvel has always been about the real world. Good science fiction is the real world with the volume turned up."

SPIDER-MAN 2099 will debut along with three other Marvel 2099 titles, PUNISHER 2099, DOOM 2099, and RAVAGE 2099. Stan Lee created and will be writing the last title.

Day by Day

Stan Lee, who created Spider-Man thirty years ago, still writes the daily newspaper strip. "The strip is done in a totally different way than the comic," explains Stan. "The pacing and rhythm are much slower. You're only dealing with three, sometimes two panels. The first panel summarizes the previous strip, the second moves the story along, and the third is your cliffhanger."

Stan finds it a challenge to keep the reader's attention, citing that the monthly book "depends a lot on the action sequences, while the strip cannot take advantage of that." Thus, Stan builds suspense through the dialogue.

Stan is amazed at the writers of the Spider-Man monthlies, as they often know what they are going to be writing in a particular issue months in advance. "I never know today what I will be writing tomorrow. I try to place myself in the position of the reader," Stan continued. "I wonder, 'Wow, how's he going to get out of this one?" He also finds that if he knows too much of what a story is going to be, he loses interest. "It's like seeing a movie that I've already seen."

Is this approach different from the one he took when writing the monthly? "Not at all. What I try to do is write an interesting story. If I like the story," he continued, "I hope that someone else will. None of us is all that different. If you genuinely love something, a good percentage of others will too."

Whatever his secret, Stan seems to be doing the right thing. Since the Spider-Man strip debuted in 1973, "Star Trek," "Superman" and "Star Wars" strips have also made their debut. Of the four, only Spider-Man survives.

Conducting a Spider in Four Parts

Danny Fingeroth, the main arbiter of the Spider-Man titles, finds it a challenge to oversee such diverse talents on Marvel's most recognizable character. He must keep the overall feel of the books constant, while still allowing the writers their creative freedom.

"His knowledge of Spider-Man is incredible," explained Howard Mackie. "If I need information about a particular event in Peter Parker's life, Danny can pull the issue and page number out of thin air."

"The toughest part about my job," Fingeroth explained, "is keeping the stories fresh. What can be done to surprise or thrill the readers, yet is still true to the character?"

Future Tense

Following the Venom/Carnage storyline in THE AMAZING SPIDER-MAN, there will be a couple of one issue adventures featuring the Shocker and the Lizard, then a very special two-part tale centering on The Red Skull and the beginning of a major mystery with long-term ramifications for Peter Parker.

In THE SPECTACULAR SPIDER-MAN, the man who brought us "Kraven's Last Hunt," J.M. DeMatteis, is doing equally thought provoking stories featuring The Green Goblin, Venom and The Vulture. And Howard Mackie has exciting stories planned in THE WEB OF SPIDER-MAN featuring Ghost Rider and Daredevil.

Meanwhile, in SPIDER-MAN, we can expect to see more Erik Larsen, an INFINITY WAR crossover by Howard Mackie and Larry Alexander, and a special 30th anniversary issue by Tom DeFalco and Ron Frenz, the team that brought readers the first appearances of the Hobgoblin and The Rose.

Danny explained, "Although the series of stories we will be doing in SPIDER-MAN may not fit into the continuity of the character, expect to see a three-month four-title crossover at the end of 1992 or early 1993."

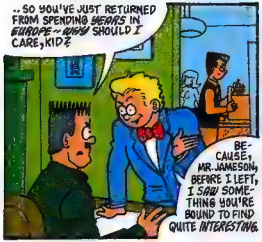
Danny promises that the 30th anniversary issues of THE AMAZING SPIDER-MAN (#365 shipping June 9), THE SPECTACULAR SPIDER-MAN (#189 shipping April 28), THE WEB OF SPIDER-MAN (#90 shipping May 5) and SPIDER-MAN (#26 shipping July 21), will be special. Each will feature a retelling of Spider-Man's origin from the unique viewpoint of a different cast member. The covers will all be printed on card stock with a 4" x 5" hologram, and each book will contain a triptych poster, each drawn by a different artist, including Charles Vess and John Romita, Jr.

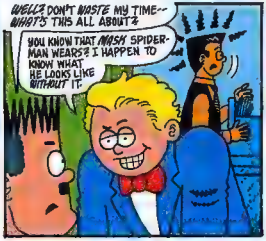
THE AMAZING SPIDER-MAN will be particularly special, as it will be triple-sized and its hologram will show a Mark Bagley re-creation of the cover to AMAZING FANTASY #15.

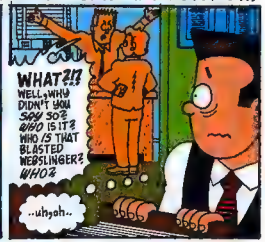
"The Spider-Man titles are changing in ways that, if you haven't picked them up lately, you should," he concluded.

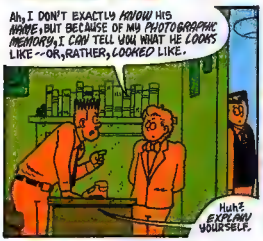
—Stephen Vrattos

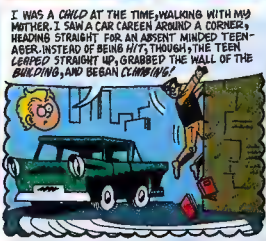
FRED HEMBECK PRESENTS PETER PARKER'S PECK OF PREPOSTEROUSLY POIGNANT PERSONAL PROBLEMS!!!

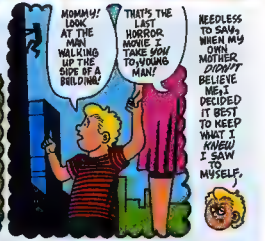

..SO YOU'VE JUST RETURNED FROM SPENDING *BEARS* IN *EUROPE*--*AWAY* SHOULD I CARE, KID?
BE-CAUSE-- MR. JAMESON, BEFORE I LEFT, I *SAW* SOME-THING YOU'RE BOUND TO FIND QUITE *INTERESTING*.

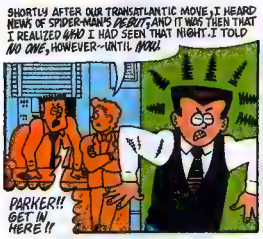

WELL? DON'T *WASTE* MY TIME-- *WHAT'S* THIS ALL ABOUT?
YOU KNOW THAT *MASH* SPIDER-MAN WEARS? I HAPPEN TO KNOW WHAT HE LOOKS LIKE *WITHOUT* IT.



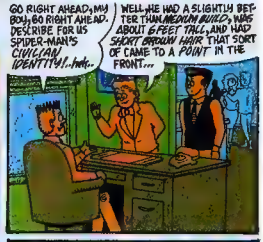

Ah, I DON'T EXACTLY *KNOW* HIS *NAME*, BUT BECAUSE OF MY *PHOTOGRAPHIC MEMORY*, I *CAN* TELL YOU WHAT HE *LOOKS* LIKE--OR, RATHER, *LOOKED* LIKE.
Huh? *EXPLAIN* YOURSELF.

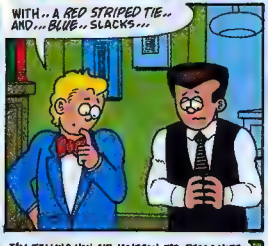

I WAS A *CHILD* AT THE TIME, WALKING WITH MY MOTHER. I SAW A CAR CAREEN AROUND A CORNER, HEADING STRAIGHT FOR AN ABSENT MINDED TEEN-ABER. INSTEAD OF BEING *HIT*, THOUGH, THE TEEN *LEAPED* STRAIGHT UP, GRABBED THE WALL OF THE *BUILDING*, AND BEGAN *CLIMBING!*

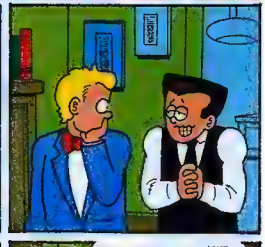

MOMMY! LOOK AT THE MAN WALKING UP THE SIDE OF A BUILDING!
THAT'S THE LAST HORROR MOVIE I TAKE *YOU* TO, YOUNG MAN!
NEEDLESS TO SAY, WHEN MY OWN MOTHER *DIDN'T* BELIEVE ME, I DECIDED IT BEST TO KEEP WHAT I *KNEW* I SAW TO MYSELF.

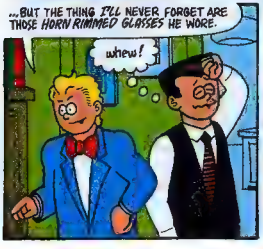

SHORTLY AFTER OUR TRANSATLANTIC MOVE, I HEARD NEWS OF SPIDER-MAN'S *SECRETS*, AND IT WAS THEN THAT I REALIZED *WHAT* I HAD SEEN THAT NIGHT. I TOLD *NO ONE*, HOWEVER--UNTIL *NOW!*
PARKER!! *GET IN HERE!!*

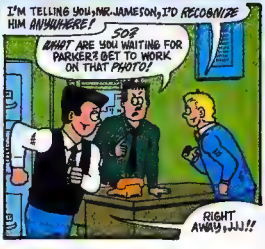
Y-YES, CHIEF?
PARKER, I WANT YOU TO WORK UP A *COMPOSITE PHOTO* OF THE DESCRIP-TION THIS YOUNG MAN IS GOING TO GIVE US.
OH, AND *DON'T* CALL ME CHIEF-- IT'S SO CLICHE.


GO RIGHT AHEAD, MY BOY, GO RIGHT AHEAD. DESCRIBE FOR US SPIDER-MAN'S *CIVILIAN IDENTITY!!..heh..*
WELL, HE HAD A SLIGHTLY BET-TER THAN *MEDIUM BUILD*, WAS ABOUT *6 FEET TALL*, AND HAD *SHORT BROWN HAIR* THAT SORT OF CAME TO A *POINT* IN THE FRONT...





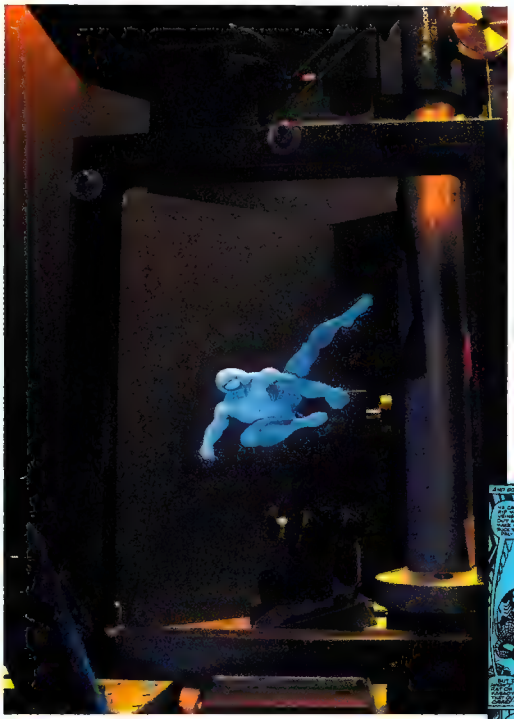



I'M TELLING YOU, MR. JAMESON, I'D *RECOGNIZE* HIM *ANYWHERE!*
SO? *WHAT* ARE YOU WAITING FOR PARKER? GET TO WORK ON THAT *PHOTO!*
RIGHT AWAY, J.J.!!

..heh.. Y'KNOW, THE *NEXT* TIME I SEE CLARK, I REALLY OUGHT TO *APPLAUDE* FOR ALL THOSE *CRACKS* I'VE MADE ABOUT HIS..heh.. *LAME* DISGUISE!..
..SAY, DIDN'T PARKER WEAR GLASSES WHEN HE *FIRST* BEGAN WORKING HERE?..

THE MAKING OF THE HOLOGRAMS

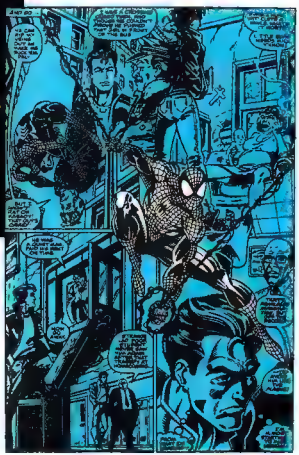
Marvel is celebrating Spider-Man's 30th anniversary with state-of-the-art holograms scheduled to appear on each of the character's four regular titles. This is the first time that holograms have been incorporated into a Marvel book. They will appear on SPECTACULAR SPIDER-MAN #189, WEB OF SPIDER-MAN #90, AMAZING SPIDER-MAN #365 and SPIDER-MAN #26. No effort has been spared in making Marvel's hologram debut a major success.



Photographs by Christopher Ebel

The Spider-Man statue in the laser assembly framework. The room is specially lit with red and yellow lights, since improper lighting will ruin the final image. The blue light is the laser beam.

Once the decision was finalized to do the holograms, time was short, so the first statue was based on existing artwork from AMAZING SPIDER-MAN #36.



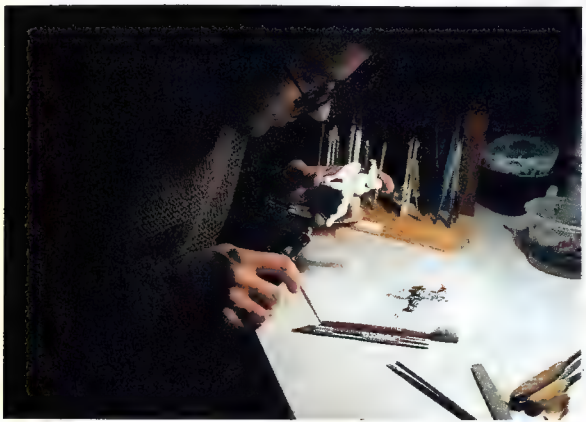
Marvel Art Director John Romita works on the illustration for the second hologram, set for WEB OF SPIDER-MAN #90. This artwork is to be sent to the sculptor, who will use it as the guide for a statue of the Spider-Man figure. The background artwork will be split into varying levels to further the three-dimensional illusion.

The idea of a hologram cover had been in discussion for some time, and every editor wanted one of their titles to carry the first. Editor-in-Chief Tom DeFalco made the decision to run the first hologram on AMAZING SPIDER-MAN #365, the 30th anniversary issue. After seeing the success of the Impel hologram trading cards, ace Marketing Manager Sven Larsen pushed for four separate holograms that would cover all of the key Spider-Man titles. In January 1992 final approval was given.

With just four months before the first hologram cover was scheduled to hit the stands, Sven and Manufacturing Manager Stephanie Fogle set up a meeting with the Marvel Manufacturing Department, Tom DeFalco, editor Danny Fingeroth and his assistant Eric Fein, and the people from Holografx Inc., the Paterson, NJ manufacturer that would create the finished holograms.

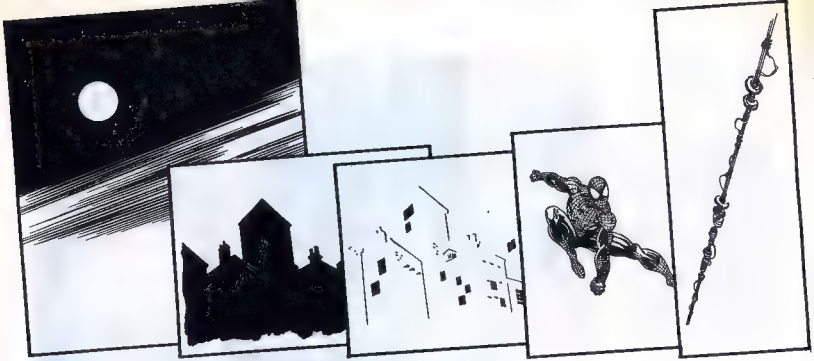
Comic book readers have become familiar with holograms created by shooting flat art on different levels, as on the Impel cards. Tom DeFalco felt it necessary to create the Spider-Man holograms using *state-of-the-art* techniques, even though this would put considerable strain on an already tight schedule. To create a more realistic, three-dimensional effect, a sculptor would be commissioned to create detailed models of Spider-Man that would be combined with flat background artwork.

"The idea of a hologram cover had been in discussion for some time, and every editor wanted one of their titles to carry the first."



Sculptor David Dann puts the final touches on the first Spider-Man statue, which appeared in the hologram for SPECTACULAR SPIDER-MAN #189. The ⅜" thick figure is not fully three-dimensional, but is somewhat flattened front and back. When photographed under the laser, this depth is sufficient to give the full 3-D illusion. At this stage, the figure has none of the painted detail which David will add.

Photo by Barbara Gref

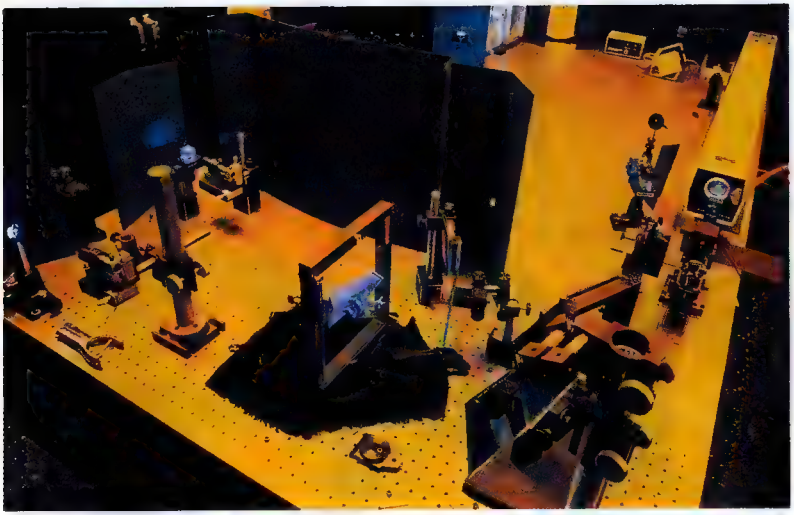


The background artwork drawn by John Romita for use as the setting for the first Spider-Man hologram. Each element will be placed on a different level.

One of the major concerns was that acceptable models be created. There are specific considerations that compound the difficulty of making a good model for a hologram. These models need to be made the same size as the finished image; there is no way to make a large, easy-to-handle model and reduce it. Since holograms are made in monochromatic (one-color) laser light, no color can be used, and all of the desired details and shading need to be painted in muted gray tones.

Due to the limitations of the laser lighting used in making a hologram, the model cannot exceed a depth of ½" without image quality suffering, so the model must be drastically foreshortened. Because a hologram forms an ultra-high resolution image that can be viewed from several different angles, all of the model's most minute details and imperfections are visible in a brightly lit, well-made hologram.

A close-up of the statue lit by the blue laser beam.



The laser set-up at Holografx, the New Jersey hologram manufacturer creating the Spider-Man holograms. The long box in the upper right corner is the laser itself.

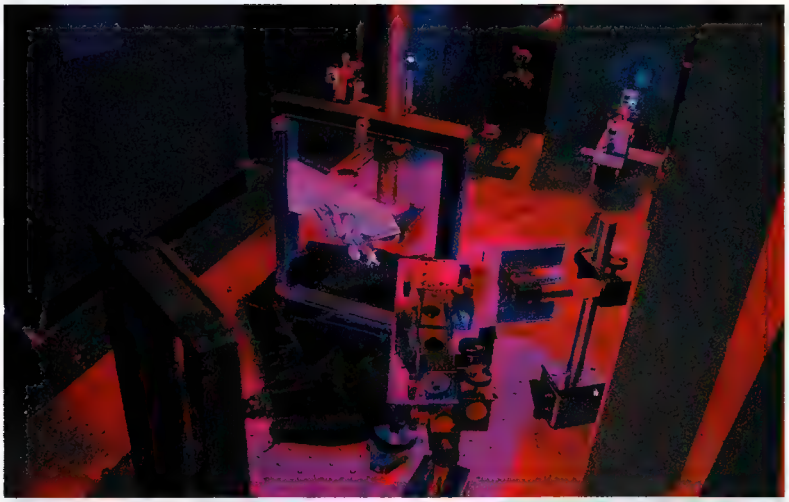
John Romita's Spider-Man figure for the second hologram, before the background artwork was added.

All of this showed the necessity for the services of a *very* talented model-maker who had enough experience to make a technically perfect model in *one week*. Fortunately, the people at Holografx knew such a sculptor.

Born and raised in New Haven, CT, David Dann currently resides in upstate New York. He studied figure sculpting at Cornell University as an undergraduate, and went on to graduate with a Masters of Fine Art from the University of Chicago. David started his career building dioramas for the Field Museum of Natural History in Chicago. He moved to New York and began making models for the holography department of American Bank Note Holographics, where his credits include the hologram on the cover of the November 1990 issue of *Omni*. David has worked with Holografx on numerous projects including the model for a full page hologram that appeared on the back cover of the December 1988 *National Geographic Magazine*. He recently finished a display model of an Archaeopteryx dinosaur skeleton for the American Museum of Natural History.

"Tom DeFalco felt it necessary to create the Spider-Man holograms using state-of-the-art techniques, even though this would put considerable strain on an already tight schedule."

With the ship date for SPECTACULAR SPIDER-MAN #189 looming only weeks away, Danny Fingeroth chose artwork by Mark Bagley and Randy Emberlin that had been used in AMAZING SPIDER-MAN #361 as the basis for the first model, with new background art to be created by John Romita.



The second statue under the laser at Holografx. The red is the room lighting, the blue is the laser beam.

The statue sculpted from John Romita's illustration for the second hologram, to be placed on WEB OF SPIDER-MAN #90.

One week later, the background art was almost finished, when a box arrived on Danny's desk. Inside was one of the most astonishing pieces of sculpture anyone at Marvel had ever seen. Even Tom DeFalco gave a quiet "wow" when he saw it. The model and the background art were taken to Holografx to be combined and holographically recorded.

At the same time, work was in progress for the WEB OF SPIDER-MAN #90. Original source art was commissioned from John Romita and featured Spidey poised on a high chimney top. As with the first, Mr. Dann produced an exceptional rendering in three dimensions that was to be combined with background art by Romita.

"Inside was one of the most astonishing pieces of sculpture anyone at Marvel had ever seen."

The second sculpture, with background art, went to Holografx as they were finishing up the first hologram. More than 35 hours went into the production of the first hologram, and the people there commented this was the most fun they had ever had doing a hologram. There is a general feeling that comic strip artwork lends itself to holography better than just about any other art format.

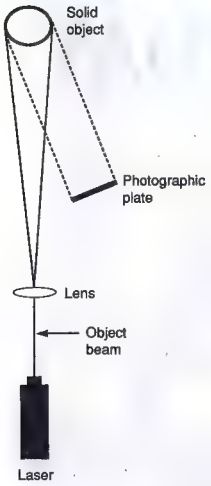
The Mark Bagley/John Romita design for the third cover, AMAZING SPIDER-MAN #365, re-creates the cover of AMAZING FANTASY #15. In this cover, both Spidey and the villain form the model. The cover design for SPIDER-MAN #26 will depict Spidey swinging upside-down and will again feature John Romita source art.

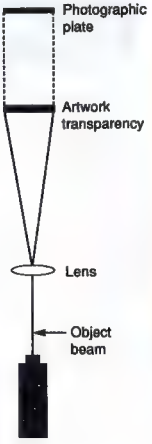
These four covers will certainly provide one of the most notable events in the 30th anniversary celebration. This use of three dimensional models will set a new standard of excellence in comic book holography, and will set a new standard among comic book fans as well. With the time and effort that went into pushing the limits on these holograms at Marvel and at Holografx, it will be a difficult act to top.

— Chris Ebel

(Special thanks to Lisa Ameijide, Vinnie Semantille and Jeff St. Thomas of Holografx, and to Ron Erickson of the Museum of Holography.)

The sculpture for the third hologram. This Mark Bagley/ John Romita re-creation of the original AMAZING FANTASY #15 cover will grace the actual 30th anniversary cover of AMAZING SPIDER-MAN (#365) in June.





This is how the object and art are lit by the laser beam. A more complex setup involving a system of mirrors and lenses would be required to actually create the hologram.

The Holographic Illusion

A hologram uses laser light to produce the illusion of a three-dimensional (3-D) image. The laser light records information about an object on a chemically coated photographic glass plate. To do so, the laser either passes through transparent art, or bounces off of an object (such as the Spider-Man models), onto the photographic plate.

When the photographic plate is developed in the darkroom, microscopic pits form on the surface. Whenever a person looks at the plate under light, the pits bend and focus the light to form the 3-D effect. When the hologram is turned so it is being viewed at the same angle as the laser beam originally struck the object, the original image is reconstructed.

Each layer in a hologram must first be individually recorded by laser in an exposure called an "H-1." In the case of *just one* Spider-Man hologram, four H-1's were needed for four levels of art, one featuring the sculpture.

In the laboratory, the laser beam is passed through art or bounced off of the statue and onto the photographic plate. This laser beam must be wide enough to cover the entire object being recorded. When the H-1 plate is developed, it appears milky gray under normal light. The resulting H-1 hologram can *only* be viewed under laser light, which will reveal that an image has been captured on the plate.

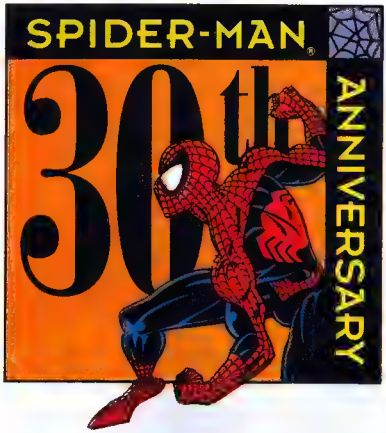
The final, or "H-2" hologram, as seen by the readers, combines all four H-1's with the peaks and valleys embossed into paper-thin material "metalized" for the foil appearance. It is viewable under normal light, to give the 3-D impression when turned from side to side (but *not* up and down).

Unlike holograms previously used in comics, the Spider-Man holograms have been created using both flat art (for the backgrounds) and a 3-D statuette. The physical depth of the statue adds to the 3-D illusion and enhances the impression that the viewer is seeing the image from more than one position.

The best light for viewing a hologram is natural, direct sunlight or a halogen spotlight (even the small kind often used in desk lamps) emanating from a single light source.

Hey, Gang! Your friendly neighborhood Spider-Man here. I just wanted to take the time to thank you for picking up this special issue of MARVEL AGE and to tell you that I'm as excited about all these birthday happenings as the folks at Marvel. The bullpen has been doing a knockout job telling you about all the special projects they're cooking up to celebrate my 30th birthday bash. But being the modest guy that I am, I couldn't let an entire issue of MARVEL AGE go by without tipping my hat to the guys and gals who helped cook up this special celebration. So sit back and relax as I fill you in on the details of what I call. . .

"THE SECRET ORIGIN OF SPIDER-MAN'S 30th BIRTHDAY."



The writers at Marvel tell me that when you start a story you should "begin at the beginning." For me, that started in June of 1962 when two guys named Stan Lee and Steve Ditko decided to turn an ending into a beginning. They took the final issue of a failing title called AMAZING FANTASY and used it to introduce the world to a bold new character in comic book history. . .me! Little did they realize what they had unleashed on the world that day. Over time, Stan, Steve, and comicdom in general would learn that I wasn't just *any* super hero. I was something special.

Thirty years later I've become the most successful comic book super hero in the world. I've sold over a quarter billion comics (that's one for every man, woman, and child in the United States according to my fellow Avenger, Captain America!) and my smiling face has appeared on a host of licensed products. In fact, along with a little help from a guy named Todd McFarlane, I blasted into the 1990's by setting new sales records for the industry with the release of SPIDER-MAN #1 (Of course the X-Men broke the record last year. But, hey, it's friendly competition.) With that kind of popularity behind me, it's no wonder the guys at Marvel got excited by my big anniversary.

To get things started, Mike Hobson and Tom DeFalco (Marvel's answer to J. Jonah Jameson and Robbie Robertson) got together for a strategy session with Spider-Editor Danny Fingeroth, his assistant Eric Fein, and a bunch of Marvel's crackerjack sales, promotions, and marketing guys (i.e. the suits). They started with an outline of my publishing history and reports indentifying events you guys liked best over the years. Danny then presented his initial editorial plans for the year and everyone kibitzed in the traditional Marvel manner. Oh, yeah. I forgot. All this started way back in September of 1991. Talk about planning ahead! The end result was a tentative schedule for the year and a mission for Marvel's promotional department.

Come up with a logo for the 30th anniversary.

Now, let me tell you something. I love the original Spider-Man logo that you see every month on AMAZING SPIDER-MAN. Hey, I love it so much I've made Marvel use it on all my books! But Marvel needed something different if the 30th anniversary message was going to really stand out. The official anniversary logo also had to be different than the logos devised for the Captain America, Fantastic Four and Hulk anniversaries. Those logos were designed mainly for use in the UPC boxes (the little white boxes you see in the bottom left hand corner of most comics). My anniversary logo was going to appear on all sorts of licensed product as well as the comics themselves. It not only had to be eye-catching but versatile. So the guys in Marvel's promotions department knew they had their job cut out for them. Mark Erickson, Marvel's Vice-President of Advertising and Promotions, put his own team and a number of outside studios on the project. They went through more than 80 designs before coming up with one that satisfied me and the folks at Marvel! Talk about super heroic efforts!

A lot of the rejected designs would have been good enough for an ordinary project, but only the official Spider-Man 30th anniversary logo satisfied all of Marvel's needs. The final logo is high contrast (to stand out on Marvel's multi-colored covers), versatile, brings home the 30th anniversary message in a definite but unobtrusive way, and (most importantly) it features everybody's favorite web-slinger doing what he does best. Only thing was, once the crew at Marvel finally decided on a logo, they needed something to put it on.

If you follow the Marvel line on a regular basis, you may have noticed that the House of Ideas is taking its anniversary issues pretty seriously these days (That's what happens as you mature, youngsters!). With the knockout response to special issues like FANTASTIC FOUR #358 and HULK #393, the boys knew they had to plan something really special for their web-slinging,

"A lot of the rejected designs. . . would have been good enough for an ordinary project, but only the official Spider-Man 30th anniversary logo satisfied all of Marvel's needs."

flagship character. How did they come by this knowledge? Easy. Back in early October, Marvel staffers arranged a series of question and answer sessions with Marvel fans in New York, Chicago and Los Angeles. Marvel picked these fans by polling retailers about their best customers and checking lists of WAM (Marvel's fan club) members in those metropolitan areas.

Readers were contacted by an independent research company and if they met the study requirements they were invited to come in and talk about comics (Imagine being paid to talk about comics! It's almost like working

at Marvel.). Marvel researchers solicited their opinions on a range of topics from cover design to story content to special merchandising. One of the most important topics they discussed were plans for my 30th birthday bash. Those fans told Tom DeFalco and his crew that they would really miss the boat if they didn't cook up some major excitement for my 30th anniversary. The Marvel guys realize that you are their real bosses, so in an effort to please you and me both they came up with the Spider-Man Anniversary Editions.

The anniversary team started out with the idea of doing a special edition of AMAZING SPIDER-AMN #365 (the actual anniversary issue) but that concept was soon expanded to include all four Spider-Man titles. After a quick review of the production schedule it was decided that SPECTACULAR SPIDER-MAN #189, WEB OF SPIDER-MAN #90, AMAZING SPIDER-MAN #365 and SPIDER-MAN #26 would be the issues that received special treatment. To start things off with a bang each issue was designed to feature a foil embossed cover (a la SILVER SURFER #50). Each edition was also designed to feature a self-contained story so any Marvel fan could jump on and join in the celebration. Many members of the planning group fondly remembered the pinups from the old Marvel annuals, so it was decided to include fold out posters, as well. The team also wanted to include my origin in each anniversary edition, but they were afraid that reading the same story four different times would bore readers. It was Spidey editor Danny Fingeroth who came up with the brilliant twist of telling the origin story from four different characters' points of view. For the first time readers will be able to see my origin as perceived by Aunt May, the Burglar, J. Jonah Jameson and myself. I'm looking forward to this since I only know the story from one point of view!

"For the first time, readers will be able to see my origin as perceived by Aunt May, the Burglar, J. Jonah Jameson and myself."

When you combined wraparound covers, extra pages, fold out posters and foil embossed front covers Marvel had a series of birthday presents no true Spider-Fan could afford to miss!

Of course, when you're planning a party, you have to let everyone know about it. You or I would just send out invitations. But with a legion of readers out there, the Bullpen was looking at a serious case of writer's cramp. So, in the mighty Marvel tradition of getting other people to do your work, the gang at Marvel started looking for suckers. . ."ahem". . .I mean partners, to help them spread the word.

The first group they targeted was the direct distributors (the guys who get your retailer his comics every week). On two separate occasions, in Key West and Las Vegas, Marvel outlined my birthday plans to the distributors, who would in turn pass along the information to the retailers who let you know what's going on. To help the retailers keep you informed, Marvel's Promotions Department created a special poster highlighting the various 30th anniversary projects, and a Spider-Man birthday pack with sell sheets and other spider-paraphernalia to make sure that no one would miss out on the excitement.

Marvel's licensing department met with Comic Images and Planet Studios (among others) to ensure that there would be plenty of t-shirts, pins and other anniversary goodies. Finally, Marvel broke the news to its guerrilla agents in the field, the members of WAM, in a special article in their February newsletter. Their reward for getting everyone excited about 30 years of Spidey greatness? A special 30th anniversary print by Erik Larsen created exclusively for the fan club, that will be shipping later on this year.

By this time, the final details were being hammered out. Promotions were being planned, stories were being spun and everyone was abuzz with excitement. So, of course, Trouble Makin' Tom DeFalco had to put an end to all that.

At a progress meeting in mid-January the Chief voiced a major concern about the Spider-Man anniversary editions. "The thing of it is. . ." Tom exclaimed, "I'm not sure we're doing the right thing on these anniversary editions." "You mean the foil embossed covers?," the rest of the crew responded. "Yeah," said Tom, "You see, we've already done foil embossing. This is Spider-Man. Our flagship character, our corporate symbol, the guy that slipped me 25 bucks this morning." (Hey, in 30 years you pick up a few tricks.) "He needs somethin' special. He needs a Marvel first. He needs. . .holograms!" "But Tom, other companies have already done holograms!" the crestfallen crew replied. "Well, we'll make them bigger and better!" Tom replied, "Gruenwald, get Gene Durante and Alison Gill in the manufacturing department on the project. We haven't foisted anything off, er, that is, invited them to participate yet." And so, I got those nifty holograms (which you can read about elsewhere in this issue of MARVEL AGE) on my special editions. Just in time too! The celebration was about to begin!

January saw the release of the MARVEL MILESTONE EDITION of AMAZING FANTASY #15 and to steal a phrase, it was "deja vu, all over again" for your friendly neighborhood storyteller. That feeling continued throughout February and March with the return of my classic '70s creative team, Gerry Conway and Ross Andru, on the SPIDER-MAN: FEAR ITSELF graphic novel and the release of the softcover SPIDER-MAN MASTERWORKS which took the first five issues of AMAZING SPIDER-MAN plus A.F. #15 and made them available in an affordable trade paperback.

Things really started to sizzle in April with the release of SPECTACULAR SPIDER-MAN #189, the first anniversary edition. With its wraparound cover, special anniversary stories and way cool hologram (thanks, Tom!). I'm sure it's going to be a book Spidey fans will treasure for years to come!

THROUGH A FREAKISH TWIST OF FATE, YOUNG PETER PARKER IS BITTEN BY THE WRONG INSECT.....
OH, WOW....I SUDDENLY FEEL SO.... POWERFUL! LIKE I COULD LIVE THROUGH A NUCLEAR BLAST! BUT... WHY DO I HAVE THIS CRAVING FOR STALE DONUTS?
CENTRAL HIGH SCIENCE FAIR
HEY! ANYBODY SEEN "SPARKY", MY RADIOACTIVE COCKROACH?

Thanks to all the people at Marvel who've treated me so well for the past 30 years (even if you do keep coming up with guys like Carnage for me to fight!). And thanks especially to the 30th anniversary crew who have worked their tails off to ensure that 1992 will be my best year ever.

Of course, the excitement is just beginning. With three more special editions, the ASSASSIN NATION (By Michelenie and McFarlane!) and ORIGIN OF THE HOBGOBLIN trade paperbacks, the SOUL OF THE HUNTER bookshelf comic by J.M. DeMatteis and Mike Zeck, the second SPIDER-MAN POSTER BOOK, a milestone edition of AMAZING SPIDER-MAN #1, a special anniversary pin to be handed out at the key summer conventions and a host of other projects in the pipeline you should keep your eyes on everyone's favorite webhead all year long!

—transcribed by Sven Larsen

SPINNING AN IMAGE
SPIDER-MAN
AS
SEEN BY THE
WORLD
OUTSIDE
COMICS

It began in 1962 with one go-for-broke story in the final issue of a canceled series. Thirty years later, Spider-Man has achieved a stature that makes him more than a comic book star. Through the channels of the entertainment media, merchandise and public service, Spider-Man has reached more people at more levels of society than almost any other modern fictional character.

What follows are some of the highlights of Spidey's career outside comics. Included are the comments and anecdotal observations of Stan Lee and other Marvel executives and staff members — called Marvel's "point people" in non-editorial departments who deal regularly with individuals and organizations outside the comic book industry and around the world.

Their observations underscore the depth and breadth of Spider-Man's vast popularity. In fact, Executive Vice President, Joe Calamari who deals with top media and entertainment executives, observed that, "Generally most people I speak to know Spider-Man. They may not know Marvel as well, but they know Spider-Man."

While the foundation of Spidey's popularity remains his comic book appearances, television made him a household name. It began in 1967 with *Spiderman* (that's right, no hyphen), the Saturday morning cartoon series from the Grant Ray-Lawrence animation studio. Ex-Disney artist Shamus Culhane and Ralph Bakshi (who would go on to gain fame with *Lord of the Rings* and *The New Adventures of Mighty Mouse*) contributed their talents to the full-animation series for three years. *Spiderman* featured many Marvel villains as well as some created especially for the show. But perhaps its most enduring contribution to Spidey's history was its catchy theme song ("Spider-Man, Spider-Man, does whatever a spider can. . .").

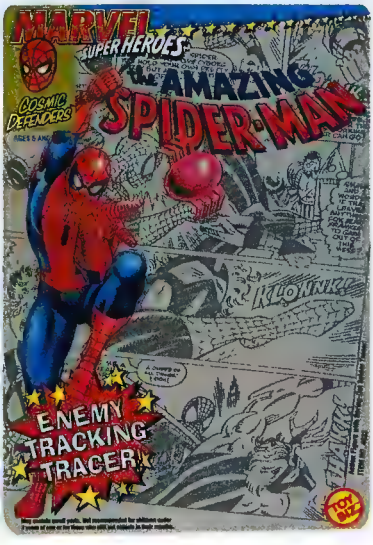
"While the foundation of Spidey's popularity remains his comic book appearances, television made him a household name."

Spidey's next big break came in 1977 when CBS aired a live action two-hour pilot film, Spider-Man (this time the hyphen was included), produced by Charles Fries. Nicholas Hammond starred as Peter Parker/Spider-Man; J. Jonah Jameson was played by David White and Irene Tedrow played a younger Aunt May. A semi-regular series soon followed that lasted through 1979, and is still seen on video.

In 1981, Spider-Man returned to Saturday morning animation, this time under the banner of Marvel's new California-based animation studio, Marvel Productions. *Spider-Man and His Amazing Friends* debuted on NBC and guest-starred a number of other Marvel super heroes such as the X-Men, Captain America and Namor. One "Amazing Friend," a character created especially for the cartoon series, was Firestar, who went went on to star in Marvel Comics, beginning with her own limited series and currently as a member of the NEW WARRIORS.

The toy industry also broadened Spidey's popularity with releases such as the Spidey figures from Mego, produced in the 1960's, now valued collector's items. In the early 1980's the *Marvel Super Heroes Secret Wars* action figure line by Mattel created a sensation with the radical new black-costumed Spider-Man. In the past, comic book characters, even the major ones, had minor costume changes. But a totally new costume for a character of Spider-Man's stature was unprecedented. The new-look Spidey figure was a hit not only in the toy line, but also in the comics. It should be noted that the toy line also featured the traditional red and blue costumed Spidey. Interestingly enough, it is the red and blue costumed Spidey figure from this line that is the prized collector's item today.

The present Marvel action figure line from Toy Biz reflects Spidey's overwhelming popularity. He was the runaway favorite of the first series of *Marvel Super Heroes* figures from Toy Biz which appeared in 1990. Three Spidey action figures are slated for the 1992 line, each with a different "power." All are in the traditional red and blue costume (the black costume now belongs to Venom).



The web-slinger participates in a colorful potpourri of high-profile media events ranging from his wedding at Shea Stadium to an appearance at the New York Stock Exchange. His likeness graces a full spectrum of licensed merchandise including bicycles, skateboards, models, pencils and stationery. The ultimate result is that Spidey is an integral part of the American pop culture experience.

"It's really great to see that more people than ever recognize Spider-Man," said Stan Lee. "And it's amazing to see how many older people do. For instance, so often when I do a television interview, the guy behind the camera. . .now, we're talking a guy in his thirties or so with a beard, usually a family man. . .anyway, in between takes invariably he'll come up to me and say something like, 'Hey, Stan, tell me about Spider-Man.' And next thing you know he'll be talking to me about the new artwork and storylines in the web-swinger's comics."

Alan Gordon, Marvel's Senior Vice President for Licensing, has had similar experiences. "What we always notice," he said, "is that when we make a presentation to a company interested in using our characters on their products, and come into contact with the creative staffs, whether it's a t-shirt licensee, a computer game company, trading card company. . .everybody goes, 'Oh, you're from Marvel? How's Spidey doing? What's going to happen to him next month?' And that's always gratifying."

In the early 1970's Marvel opened what proved to be the *third* major channel that expanded Spidey's popularity when it created the personal appearance program, designed to fill the need that developed as businesses and organizations requested appearances at stores and charity functions by Spidey and other Marvel characters. Presently the Marvel program arranges 900 appearances a year, most of them by Spider-Man.

"Nothing can compare to the reaction of a room full of top management executives who are trying to decide on a promotional idea when we bring in Spider-Man and some of our other characters."

Alyson Bristol, Director of Special Events who oversees the personal appearance program, commented, "Adults are just as infatuated with Spider-Man as the kids are. Nothing can compare to the reaction of a room full of top management executives who are trying to decide on a promotional idea when we bring in Spider-Man and some of our other characters. These suit and tie people drop their barriers and everybody becomes a fun-loving kid. It's wonderful!"

Barry Kaplan Executive Vice President, Operations and Development, whose department includes the personal appearance and custom comic book programs, said, "The adults' reactions to Spider-Man are just phenomenal. Our personal appearance characters are very animated, athletic and articulate, which is very important because since they have to speak at the store and mall appearances and at charity and pro-social events, they must be able to field the tremendous number of weird questions that kids ask.

"Spider-Man's just a wonderful spokesperson for the company and for pro-social causes," Barry added. "For instance, we've done custom comics on child abuse and we've later seen articles written indicating that children have come forward to police or teachers, reporting inci-

dents of some types of abuse. When asked why they came forward or how they knew to come to an official, the children said that 'Spider-Man told them'."

Oddly enough, it's in this area where Spidey is almost too famous. Barry acknowledged that one of the difficulties Marvel has had in the custom comics area is trying to convince sponsors to use other characters which may be more appropriate to the actual message they want to tell.

Overseas, most people know Spidey through the comics. As might be expected, Spidey's strongest presence overseas is in the United Kingdom. Italy, France, Germany and Japan are also countries where he is highly popular.

Given the challenges of selling uniquely American characters to countries with different cultures, Spider-Man has proved to be one super hero that has never been banned in any country. This is a consideration because in some countries, such as Sweden and Germany, the governments try to place the emphasis on the more non-violent characters.

Marvel recently received a report about a German radio station doing random street interviews with kids, and one of the questions asked was if they knew Spider-Man. Three out of five kids asked said that they did. And what came out of the interview was that the reason they like Spider-Man was because he was vulnerable. He had human qualities and human emotions. They thought that Spider-Man was more like them because, even though he had super powers, he went through troubles and had problems just like they did. They could relate to them.

And perhaps that is the key to Spidey's enduring and ever-increasing popularity. It isn't so much that he is a super hero, but the fact that from the very beginning, as Stan said, "He had so many faults and foibles. He had family problems, money problems, and in the beginning, school problems. So you see, in addition to his usual battles with far-out super-villains, Spidey also had to wrestle with the same everyday dilemmas that his readers themselves continually face, making it easy for those readers to relate to him."

Perhaps the greatest comment on the effect of Spider-Man's presence came when Stan first met director James Cameron, of *Aliens* and *Terminator* fame. "He put his arm around my shoulder," Stan said, "and he told me, 'Stan, the one thing in the world I would give anything to do would be to write, direct and produce Spider-Man.'" As so many Spidey and Marvel fans already know, that wish has come true. The result should open a new, huge chapter in the history of Spider-Man.

—Dwight Jon Zimmerman

MARK'S REMARKS

I have a confession to make. . .one that could possibly get me into a lot of trouble. In fact, just so it doesn't get around, I'm going to have to swear you all to secrecy

. . .Do you swear? Okay.

Spider-Man is not my favorite Marvel character.

What? You say it's no big deal that Marvel's most popular hero is not my fave, and you probably guessed as much for the fact that I write CAPTAIN AMERICA, not one of the SPIDER-books? Then I'd better elaborate further:

Spider-Man is not in my Top Ten favorite Marvel characters.

There. I said it.

Why? Well, Marvel has so many really cool characters, you see, that there're just so many guys that I like better. . . That's not the full reason. The reason is. . .I never bonded with Spider-Man as a kid. Yeah, I was one of the lucky ones who bought AMAZING SPIDER-MAN #1 right off the newsstands, and the next bunch of issues as well, but. . .I never related to Peter Parker as much as some of the other Marvel heroes. I know I should have; after all, we were both bespectacled bookworms, but I just had trouble relating to a kid so brilliant that he was able to invent something as wonderful as his web-fluid. In other words, ol' Petey was special before he even got that spider-bite that gave him powers and made him extra-special, and little Markie (me) had a little trouble identifying with that. But I do know someone who's always had a thing for the spider-guy and would love to help me finish this column. . .if I can manage to wake him from his morning nap.

Huh? Oh — hi, Gruenwald! Is it time for lunch already?

Not quite, Tom. (Yes, folks, I'm actually talking to our illustrious and bleary-eyed editor in chief, two-fisted Tom DeFalco.)

You mind turnin' off the light? I got a tough afternoon ahead of me. I'm going to have to cut my lunch down to a measly three hours today so that I can fit in my weekly manicure, a quick rumba lesson, and an afternoon nap before quitting time.

Er. . .Tom. I hate to interfere with your daily routine, but I'm writing one of those columns I do for MARVEL AGE MAGAZINE, and I could use some help.

Sorry to hear it, but I need my beauty sleep. Why don't you get Carl Potts to help. . .if he isn't busy dunking late freelancers in his piranha tank.

Actually, I need you. Steve Saffel — MARVEL AGE's new editor — asked me to write about Spider-Man for his 30th anniversary. Unfortunately, I'm not the best choice to tell folks how great Spider-Man is. . .

You shouldn't accept an assignment if you don't have the qualifications!

Yeah, I know. Why don't you write my column for me?

Me? Write "Mark's Remarks?" That sounds too much like real work — hahahahahaha!

We wouldn't have to call it "Mark's Remarks." We could rename it — I don't know, "Tom's Talk of the Town," or "DeFalco's DeFancy DeFenestrations" — like that.

Just turn off the light, and leave me alone.

How about this then — I'll interview you about what's so good about Spider-Man and you clue me in. . .

Well. . .Okay. But I get half what you make for this article.

Whatever. So, Big Tom, you wrote SPIDER-MAN for a couple of years and edited him for several years before that — I was your assistant editor back then, remember? — so you must have given some thought to Spider-Man's appeal. I couldn't relate to Spider-Man as a kid. I take it you could?

Sure! If you couldn't, you must have been a pretty strange kid.

Ahem. What did you relate to about the character?

Spider-Man was a real person. He had insecurities. He was hassled by his parental units. He had all the sorts of problems that everyday people have. Most super heroes before Spider-Man followed a basic formula. They got their powers, and immediately started patrolling the city. Spider-Man was the first character that I'd ever seen that had a real life aside from being Spider-Man.

The beginning of the DeFalco run on THE AMAZING SPIDER-MAN.

What were you relating to? His specific problems? Or the fact that he had problems?

A lot of them I could relate to specifically, and the other

ones I could relate to by extension. I cared about him. I was concerned about his problems.

Would you say this is the fundamental appeal of Spider-Man then — his realistic problems?

From the beginning we were following the adventures of Peter Parker who happens to be Spider-Man — as opposed to somebody who is first and foremost a super hero and occasionally assumes the guise of being human. Peter Parker is always Peter Parker. No matter what situation he is involved in, you know it's Peter Parker beneath the mask. This guy has a life twenty-four hours a day and only a part of that life is being Spider-Man. . .just like other high school kids spend part of their lives as basketball players on the school team.

What's your take on Peter Parker's personality?

He is a guy with tremendous power who never has any confidence in himself. I can relate to that. When I was given the assignment to write Spider-Man, I was terrified and wasn't sure I could do it. I think that terror helped me identify with the character.

Of all Marvel characters then, how does Spider-Man rate?

In my personal pantheon, he's number one.

Really? I wouldn't have guessed that. . .

Spider-Man is a guy who can accomplish almost any goal he sets for himself. If he can just believe in himself, he can do it. My other favorite character — I have two number ones — is Captain America, who also has the ability to find a way to accomplish anything. The difference between them is that Captain America knows that he'll find a way no matter what he's up against. He's a character without doubt. I sometimes think of him as Marvel's only super hero. Spider-Man, on the other hand, has to constantly reaffirm his belief in himself. Time and time again he gets into situations that he knows he cannot win. He tries to go the distance anyway. I find that very heroic. Captain America isn't as heroic to me because he knows in advance that he can always win.

So has Spider-Man changed over the years or has he remained true to the high school sophomore that first appealed to you?

Like most of us — you being an exception — Spider-Man has matured over the years. The fact that he's more sophisticated means he can deal with life a lot better than he could years ago. But even though he's older, I think he's still the same insecure high school student deep inside. No matter how old we get, there's still a core of insecurity inside of all of us.

How is it that you came to write SPIDER-MAN?

It's a dull story I'd just as soon not get into.

Let me be the judge of that.

Okay. I was the editor of Spider-Man for a few years and then was promoted to executive editor. The new editor, Danny Fingeroth, came and told me that the current writer had decided to leave the book, and he needed a new writer. I took out my master list of freelance writers and gave him a couple of promising names. Then I noticed Danny had this weird smile on his face and said, "Tom, those names are fine, but I was thinking of you!"

Hmmm, you were right, that was a dull story.

Leave that out of your column.

Sure.

I mean it. That anecdote better not appear in your column or I'll see to it that you are forced to write our worst selling book.

Don't get your underoos in a bundle. Do you hope to write SPIDER-MAN again someday?

Tom's personal favorite from the issues he wrote.

Yeah, I'd like to use all of the villains that I never had time to use.

Do you think that Spider-Man is one of the great icons of comic literature?

In my opinion, Spider-Man is one of the most appealing comic book characters of all time.

Hmm. Your enthusiasm is almost infectious. Spider-Man has a lot more going for him than I figured out for myself. I might even have to reconsider my Top Ten character list. Well, guess we'd better end this here. I've got to go write Marvel's lowest selling book.

Look, up in the sky, it's a bird, it's a plane, it's a Spider-Man float balloon!

Send your letters to: MARVEL AGE MAGAZINE, c/o Marvel Comics Group, 387 Park Avenue South, New York, NY 10016.

Attention correspondents: All letters to be considered for publication must include your complete name and address, though we will gladly withhold that info on request!

Yeah, we know it's a little early to run letter column titles that refer to the Macy's Thanksgiving Day Parade, but it does fit in with our special Spider-Man theme this issue. Besides, you know what they say: when you're in love, every day's Thanksgiving! Or at least it is for Leslie Matyas of Winnipeg, Canada, who sent in our snappy title. Thanks a lot, Leslie!

But hey, don't think this lets the rest of you off the hook — we still need a nifty new title for this column every single month. So get that gray matter in gear, and send 'em on in! If we use your idea, we'll even thank you right here in black and white. And recent studies show that three out of four people prefer being thanked in black and white to being thanked in other colors!

Dear Marvel,

Now there is a softcover version of MARVEL MASTERWORKS. Does this mean no more hardcover? Please say, "no," as I would sorely miss the hardcover format.

What plans, if (gulp!) any, do you have for the 1992 MASTERWORKS? I'd like to see the next X-Men, Avengers and Thor volumes, and a new Dr. Strange volume.

Andrew J. Ramsay
3 Sherwood Drive
Bebington, Merseyside
L63 8LA

Never fear, Andrew! The fact that we've started issuing MASTERWORKS in softcover format doesn't mean that we're giving up on hardcover. just that more people can get in on the fun! The four new MARVEL MASTERWORKS editions planned for this Fall include THE AMAZING SPIDER-MAN (to help celebrate the Web-Spinning 30th Anniversary), FANTASTIC FOUR, IRON MAN (his first appearance from TALES OF SUSPENSE) and, as you requested, the classic Lee/Ditko DOCTOR STRANGE tales (from STRANGE TALES).

Incidentally, don't forget that we've also been presenting classic tales in our MARVEL MILESTONE editions, such as THE INCREDIBLE HULK #1 or AMAZING FANTASY #15, not to mention the ongoing series of reprints you find in the pages of MARVEL TALES and X-MEN CLASSIC. Who says that classic literature is dead?

Uh oh. Don't look now, but we're suddenly surrounded by yellow, and that can only mean one of two things: either we're standing 'way too close to a 500-pound canary, or it's time for our LETTER OF THE MONTH! We've dug deep into our mountain of mail and come up with a letter that we think will be of particular interest to the rampaging hordes of Marveldom.

In fact, this month's Letter of the Month might be especially interesting to our rampaging *female* hordes. . .

Dear MARVEL AGE,

I'm writing to address a situation that has come to my attention just recently. The current ratio of females to males who have their own books is nearly immeasurable. Spider-Man has four books, the Punisher three, and Wolverine has his own title plus serials in MARVEL COMICS PRESENTS. Then there are countless others: Captain America, Daredevil, Darkhawk, Ghost Rider, Deathlok, Namor, Quasar, Sleepwalker, Wonder Man, the Hulk, Moon Knight, Iron Man, Silver Surfer and Doctor Strange. The only accountable woman is the She-Hulk.

Being a man myself, this doesn't really disturb me as much as confuse me. There are as many women super heroes as men, so why aren't there very many books with female stars? I think that something should be done about that. Let's let loose and pump out some books for the ladies.

Robert Beachler
1402 E. Guadalupe, #224
Tempe, AZ 89283

To tell you the truth, Robert, we agree with you. For some reason, past Marvel series with female stars (such as MS. MARVEL or THE CAT) haven't fared as well as other titles in the marketplace, but we'd love to see more of our heroines take off in series of their own. In fact, you can help it happen by checking out the adventures of everybody's favorite Nazi-hunting mercenary adventuress in the new SILVER SABLE series and Marvel UK's brand new MOTORMOUTH and HELL'S ANGEL titles! And as you think about Marvel women who have their own titles, you shouldn't limit yourself to just the super ones. you left out titles like BARBIE and BARBIE FASHION and the recent SWEET XVI Limited Series.

Dear Marvel Age Media Watch,

On the Tuesday, March 24 episode of ABC-TV's *General Hospital*, the character of Bill Eckert goes to the hospital to visit his son Sly, who is due to have his tonsils removed. Bill gives Sly several comics, including *Batman*, *Superpro*, *Elongated Man*, *Spider Web*, his "personal favorite," *Dr. Strange* and *Darkhawk*. "Superpro" is obviously "NFL SUPERPRO" and "Spider Web" is "WEB OF SPIDER-MAN," but an interesting note is that "DARKHAWK" is not actually that book at all, but the 1991 MARVEL CHRISTMAS SPECIAL (only the back cover is seen). In a later scene, Bill climbs into bed with his son and grabs what he calls "DR. STRANGE," but he actually opens up the issue of "NFL SUPERPRO."

James L. Kwak
217 Walnut Hill Drive
Richmond, KY 40475

Dear Mighty Marvel Peoples,

I've been collecting Marvel comics since the beginning of Summer last year, when I picked up the first issue of SLEEPWALKER. Since then I'm hooked. I now have over one hundred comics, of which only six are not Marvel, but I still have a few questions:

1) What's a No-Prize?

2) What's a Marvel Zombie?

3) Does Marvel ever do team-ups with other companies like DC?

4) Where should I look to find out when and where upcoming conventions will be in my region?

Sebastian Gagnon
23B Johnson Drive
Trenton, Ontario
Canada K8V 1A3

They always think "No Smoking" applies to everyone but them!

Whew! Lotsa questions there, Sebastian. Let's see what we can do about them:

1) What's a No-Prize? It's what you get for an outstanding non-effort, natch!

Oh, so you're not satisfied with a non-answer? Well, okay, here's the real scoop: A No-Prize is a special non-prize that's mailed straight to your door in an empty envelope. Once upon a time, we used to send them to people who'd found a mistake in a Marvel comic book and had come up with a clever reason why it wasn't really a mistake. More recently, though, we've been saving our No-Prizes for the lucky few who've made an effort above and beyond the call of duty, such as supplying comic books to a children's hospital. Or liberating a small foreign nation.

2) A Marvel Zombie is simply somebody who likes Marvel Comics. And from what you've said in your letter, it sounds like you're already one, Sebastian. Welcome to the ranks of the undead!

3) We sure do! In fact, if you head over to your local comics specialty shop, you might just be surprised to find a high-quality, long-lasting trade paperback that collects a whole bunch of past team-ups between Spider-Man and Superman, Batman and the Hulk, and the Teen Titans and the X-Men. Is that service or what?

4) Some convention promoters advertise their cons in Marvel titles. But if you want to be sure to catch the news on a larger number of cons, then you may want to check out the COMICS BUYER'S GUIDE, a weekly publication that frequently lists upcoming conventions (along with lots of other neat stuff). You can get a free sample copy of the BUYER'S GUIDE by writing to:

COMICS BUYER'S GUIDE
700 E. State Street
Iola, WI 54990

And while you're at it, be sure to vote in this year's CBG Fan Awards. MARVEL AGE makes a dandy "Favorite Publication About Comics."

The Official, *All-New*

Marvel Age Readers Poll

This is it...your chance to chart the course for the *new Marvel Age*. Beginning with issue #115, we're launching *Marvel Age* in dramatic new directions, with changes designed to give you the inside track here at Marvel Comics. It means more photo spreads, behind-the-scenes coverage and new entertainment features.

Most important, it means a direct line between *Marvel Age* and our readers. This magazine exists for *you*, and we want to know what you want to see. Let us know which of our existing features you want us to keep, and what new features you want us to inaugurate. Just fill out this handy ballot (or any reasonable facsimile thereof).

Please *don't* abandon my favorite features in *Marvel Age:*

- ❑ Andy Mangels' Reel Marvel
- ❑ Great Moments in Marvel History
- ❑ Hembeck's Page
- ❑ Mark's Remarks
- ❑ Marvel Age Calendar
- ❑ The Marvel Age of Comics
- ❑ Marvel Age Pro-File
- ❑ Marvel Age Super Shopper Gallery
- ❑ Marvel Comics Price Guide
- ❑ Marvel Correspondents
- ❑ Marvel Top Ten
- ❑ Marvel Trivia Quiz
- ❑ Mondo Marvel Comics
- ❑ Stan's Soapbox

While you're at it, let's see some great *new* features in the decidedly-different ***Marvel Age,*** features like:

- ❑ "Ask the Pros"
- ❑ Celebrity columns
- ❑ Collectors market reports
- ❑ New comic strips
- ❑ Photo covers
- ❑ Reader polls on subjects like:

_____

_____

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- ❑ Special WAM features including:

_____

_____

_____

- ❑ Other special features:

_____

_____

_____

_____

(Use additional pages if you need to.)

So fill out the ballot and send it to:

Marvel Age Readers' Poll
c/o Marvel Comics
387 Park Avenue South
New York, NY 10016

Your name:_____ **Age:**_____

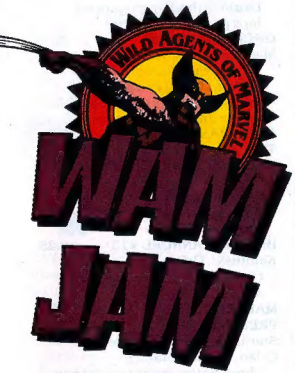
Street address:_____

City:_____ **State:**____ **Zip:**_____

(Please print.)

This is it...your chance to shape the future! And it's only the beginning. In the coming months, we'll expect to hear from you on a regular basis. As of today, you've been recruited as part of the main *Marvel Age* council of advisors. It's up to you to live up to this great responsibility. *VOTE !!*

And now, let's all get ready to welcome in a brand new feature to this lilting letter column! Innntroducing. . . the one, the only. . .



So what's a WAM Jam? It's a nifty new section that allows those fortunate few from the hallowed ranks of the Wild Agents of Marvel (WAM) to share news and views with their fellow Agents. . .while letting all you non-Agents out there tune in, as well.

To be eligible for inclusion in the WAM Jam, all you have to do is send us a letter on official WAM stationery. Or if you want to save that precious stationery for letters to the White House and heads of state, simply include your WAM membership number with your letter. See? There are no trench coats, no back alleys, and no secret codes for the messages among *our* agents. It's just fun and games and an open exchange of ideas! What could be more appropriate for our post-Cold War world?

Dear MARVEL AGE Fans,

I am a fan of the Spider-Man newspaper strip and was pleased to see the interview in MARVEL AGE #111 with John Romita, Sr., the first artist on the strip. Did you know that newspapers are dropping the strip! My local paper did and my letter to the editor about the cancellation failed to move the paper to reinstate the strip. The *Comics Revue* magazine has become a new source of the strip for me. *Unfortunately*, the Spider-Man strip is slated *to be dropped* from the *Comics Revue* unless fans of the strip prove to the *Comics Revue* editor that there are enough of us reading the strip to justify running it! Please support the Spider-Man strip in the *Comics Revue*! Write and tell the editor (Rick Norwood, Box 336, Mountain Home, Tennessee 37684, USA) that you are reading the strip and want it to continue!

Sincerely yours,

Annie Gould
74 Carsbrooke Road
Etobicoke, Ontario
Canada M9C 3C6

Dear Sirs,

This letter is of utmost importance! How can I, or any of the Marvelites out there, get their little hands on a share or shares of Marvel stock? How can we get some? Whom do we contact? And how much is a share?

I know this is a question that has been on many a Marvel fan's mind, so if you can give us this information, we would be forever grateful. Thank you.

Nicholas Tiedeman
1607 Main Street, Apt. 219
Springfield, MA 01103

Thanks for your interest in the Marvel stock. Marvel is traded on the New York Stock Exchange under the symbol "MRV."

If you want to buy Marvel stock, you have to buy it through a licensed broker. Look in your yellow pages under a heading like "stock and bond brokers." There are two types: a "full-service firm" will charge you a higher fee to buy the stock, but should provide you with professional investment advice and research. A "discount firm" will charge you a lower fee, but won't provide any advice. Regardless of the firm, the fee per share will be lower if you buy stock in "round lots" of 100 shares and higher if you buy "odd lots" of less than 100.

Thanks to Gary Fishman of The Hudson Stone Group, the firm helping Marvel with financial relations services.

Meanwhile, we'll be back in 30 days with even more educational questions and answers from the mighty world of Marvel.

NEXT ISSUE: The all-new MARVEL AGE dawns with an in-depth look at the creation of "The Rise of the Midnight Sons." Also expect to find the scoop on WILLIAM SHATNER'S TEK WORLD, the newest set of MARVEL UNIVERSE TRADING CARDS, and the secrets behind Marvel UK's newest hit — DIGITEK. All under a startling photo cover starring the *true* Midnight Sons!

COMING ATTRACTIONS CHECKLIST — JUNE 1992

FIRST WEEK

AVENGERS #350 1.75
Harras, Epting, Palmer
Guest starring Professor X, the Starjammers & X-Factor's Quicksilver!

AVENGERS WEST COAST #85 1.25
Thomas, Ross, Dzon
Spider-Man teams up with AWC to battle the sinister Spider Squad!

AVENGERS WEST COAST ANNUAL #7 2.25
Thomas, Ross, Dzon
Part 2 of "Assault on Armor City" crossover with DARKHAWK & AWC annuals!

CAGE #5 1.25
McLaurin, Turner, Ivy
An army of Power-Men? "The Evil and the Cure!" — Part 1 of 4!

CAPTAIN AMERICA #404 1.25
Gruenwald, Levins, Bulanadi
"The Man and the Wolf" — Part 3 of 6. Special guest star Wolverine!

COPS: THE JOB #3 1.25
Hama, Jusko, Harris, Palmiotti

DAREDEVIL #307 1.25
Chichester, McDaniel, Ivy
Part 1 of "Dead Man's Hand" crossover with NOMAD & PUNISHER WAR JOURNAL!

DARKHAWK #18 1.25
Fingeroth, Manley

NAMOR #29 1.25
Byrne, Lee
Guest starring Iron Fist, Namorita & the Human Torch!

NEW WARRIORS TPB 11.95
DeFalco & Nicieza/Frenz & Bagley
A collection of their first battles against the Juggernaut, Terrax and the Mad Thinker!

NFL SUPERPRO #11 1.25
Delbo, DeCarlo

NOMAD #4 1.75
Nicieza, Olliffe, McKenna
Nomad vs. Deadpool and Bushwacker! Part 2 of "Dead Man's Hand" crossover with DAREDEVIL & PUNISHER WAR JOURNAL!

ORIGINAL GHOST RIDER #2 1.75
Friedrich, Ploog, Monte
Classic re-printing of Ghost Rider battling Satan & the legions of hell with a new cover by Javier Saltares!

PUNISHER #67 1.25
Abnett, Lanning, Braithwaithe, Williamson
John Romita Jr.!

BARBIE #20 1.25
Slate, Wilshire

BILL & TED'S EXCELLENT COMIC BOOK #9 1.25
Dorkin & Severin
Death is fired and replaced by a guy named Morty!

GHOST RIDER #28 2.50
Mackie, Kubert, Kubert
"Rise of the Midnight Sons" — Part 1! A super-special polybagged issue with gatefold center and fold-out poster!

GUARDIANS OF THE GALAXY #27 1.25
Valentino, Valentino, Montano
The Guardians travel to the 20th century and battle the Inhumans! An Infinity War crossover!

IRON MAN ANNUAL #13 2.25
Kaminski, Colan
Conclusion of "Assault on Armor City"

MARVEL COMICS PRESENTS #108 1.50
Starlin, Alexander, Lobdell, Colan, Cooper, Stanici
Three stories featuring Thanos, Wolverine & Ghost Rider!

PENDRAGON #2 1.75
Tomlinson, Abnett, Gascoine, Buylla

PUNISHER & CAPTAIN AMERICA: BLOOD & GLORY #2 5.95
Chichester, Clarke, Janson

PUNISHER WAR ZONE #6 1.75
Dixon, Romita Jr., Janson
"Ladder of Death" rung 6 of 6!

QUASAR #37 1.25
Gruenwald, Capullo, Candelario
Quasar must save Eternity from the evil Magus! An Infinity War crossover!

SAVAGE SWORD OF CONAN #200 2.25
Thomas, Buscema, Chan

SILVER SABLE #3 1.25
Wright, Butler, Sanders
A new member joins the Wild Pack: Battlestar from the pages of CAPTAIN AMERICA!

SILVER SURFER #69 1.25
Marz, West, Christopher
A mysterious villain hijacks Galactus's ship! An Infinity War crossover!

SLEEPWALKER #15 1.25
Budiansky, Blevins, Manley

WOLVERINE #58 1.75
Chichester, Robertson

WONDER MAN #12 1.25
Jones, Parobeck, LaRosa

THIRD WEEK

AMAZING SPIDER-MAN ANNUAL #26 2.25
Michelinie, McDaniel, Williams
Spidey teams up with the New Warriors to battle the villainous Hero Killers! Part 1 of 3.

AVENGERS #351 1.25

CAPTAIN AMERICA #405 1.25
Gruenwald, Levins, Bulanadi

PUNISHER SUMMER SPECIAL 2.50
Mills, McKone, Panosian
The Punisher gets no summer vacation as he battles arch-rival De Sade.

SHE-HULK #42 1.75
Byrne
Star Stop Special! U.S. Archer guest stars!

TERROR, INC. #2 1.75
Chichester, Zaffino
Terror invades the domain of Bezzeel (a.k.a. the devil)!

TOXIC CRUSADERS #4 1.25
Furman, Yaniger, Barta, Staton

UNCANNY X-MEN #291 1.25

WARLOCK #4 2.50
Starlin, Starlin, Leialoha

WEB OF SPIDER-MAN #91 1.25
Mackie, Saviuk, Williamson

WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP WRESTLING #5 1.25
Lackey, Wilson, Hudson

SECOND WEEK

AKIRA #36 3.95
Otomo, Duffy, Oliff

ALPHA FLIGHT #111 1.75
Furman, Broderick, Patterson
Weapon Omega vs. Wild Child! An Infinity War crossover!

AMAZING SPIDER-MAN #365 1.25
Michelinie, Bagley, Emberlin
30th Anniversary spectacular! Featuring a hologram cover and pull-out poster by

Wolverine, Werewolf by Night and Wolfsbane guest star in this lupine legend!

CONAN THE BARBARIAN #259 1.25
Thomas, Docherty, Barras
CLIVE BARKER'S NIGHTBREED #18 2.25
Wright, Harris, Nelson
The situation goes from bad to worse as a small town plagued by werewolves gets a visit from the Nightbreed!
EPIC #3 4.95
Dixon, Braithwaite, Verheidon, D'Israeli, Burden, Snydum, Shiner, Miller
All-new tales starring: Alien Legion, Stalkers, Cholly & Flytrap and Wild Cards!
EXCALIBUR #53 1.75
Davis, Rubinstein
G.I. JOE #127 1.25
Hama, Wildman
HELL'S ANGEL #2 1.75
Jaye, Semier, Smith
INCREDIBLE HULK #396 1.25
David, Keown, Farmer
The Hulk teams up with the Punisher to battle the evil Mr. Frost!
MARVEL AGE #115 1.00
An all-new format for Marvel's favorite fan mag kicks off with a special "Rise of the Midnight Sons" issue!
MARVEL TALES #264 1.25
Lee, Leiber, Demeo
Special reprint of the one appearance of Peter Parker's parents!
PUNISHER #68 1.25
Abnett/Lanning, Braithwaite/Williamson

FOURTH WEEK

BARBIE FASHION #20 1.25
Slate, Rausch
CAPTAIN PLANET #11 1.25
Furman, Hitch, Rimmer, Taylor, Fawcett
DEATHLOK #14 1.75
McDuffie, Cowan, Manley
FANTASTIC FOUR #367 1.25
DeFalco, Ryan, Bulanadi
An unsuspecting FF is led by an evil Reed! An Infinity War crossover!
INFINITY WAR #3 2.50
Starlin, Lim, Milgrom
The war heats up as Four Freedom Plaza gets blown up!
IRON MAN #283 1.25
Kaminski, Hopgood, Wiacek
JAMES BOND, JR. #8 1.25
Abnet, Capaldi
MARVEL COMICS PRESENTS #109 1.50
Starlin, Alexander, Nocenti, Lightle, Cooper, Stanici, Conway, Fein, Sutton
Four more tales of Thanos, Wolverine, Ghost Rider & Young Gods!
MARVEL REQUIRER #29 2.50
Find out everything Marvel has to offer in July with this must-have preview available for free at your favorite comic shop!
MARVEL SWIMSUIT ISSUE 3.95
It's baaack! The smash hit of last summer returns with all new art of your favorite scantily-clad Marvel heroes as drawn by your favorite fully-dressed artists!
MOTORMOUTH #3 1.75
Marks, Frank, Smith
NEW WARRIORS #26 1.25
Nicieza, Robertson, Mahlstedt
SILVER SURFER #70 1.25
Marz, Lim, Christopher
SPECTACULAR SPIDER-MAN #191 1.25
DeMatteis, Buscema
THOR #450 2.25
DeFalco, Frenz, Milgrom
Thor travels to Asgaard to battle Heimdall and search for the real Thunder God.
WARHEADS #3 1.75
Vince, Erskine
SHIELD #38 1.75
Lobdell, Hudson
"The Cold War of Nick Fury" — Part 3 of 4!
SPIDER-MAN #25 1.75
Kavanaugh, Marinen
Trapped in Arcade's Murder-world, Spidey must fight for his life against Excaliburr!
THOR: CELESTIALS SAGA TPB 4.95
DeFalco, Frenz
The thunder god's epic "Black Galaxy" adventures with the Celestials!
WARLOCK & THE INFINITY WATCH #7 1.75
Starlin, Raney, Austin
Warlock & the Watch surrounded by the Mole Man & his monsters!
WHAT IF? #40 1.25
Nocenti, Carr, Rubinstein
"What if Storm had Remained a Thief?"
X-FACTOR #81 1.25
David, Stroman, Milgrom
X-Factor is attacked by the Brotherhood of Evil Mutants!
X-MEN #11 1.25
Lee, Lobdell, Williams
The awesome final battle against Mojo and Longshot!
WOLVERINE #59 1.75
Chichester, Roberston
X-FORCE #13 1.25
X-MEN CLASSIC #74 1.25

FIFTH WEEK

CLIVE BARKER'S HELLRAISER #15 4.95
Moore, Villagran, Saltzaber, Vosburg, Chichester, McDuffie, Jones
CONAN SAGA #65 2.25
Thomas, Buscema, Bulanadi
DR. STRANGE #44 1.75
Thomas, Isherwood
KID 'N PLAY #7 1.25
Coye, Frazier, Boyd
MARVEL UNIVERSE HANDBOOK #21 4.50
Gruenwald, Pollard
MOON KNIGHT #41 1.75
Kavanaugh, Kwapisz
Frenchie gets caught up in an Infinity War crossover battling his own alien doppelganger!
THE 'NAM #71 1.25
PUNISHER WAR JOURNAL #45 1.75
Dixon, Texeira
Part 3 of "Dead Man's Hand" crossover with DAREDEVIL and NOMAD!
WEB OF SPIDER-MAN ANNUAL #8 2.25
Michelinie, McDaniel, Williams
Rhino, Boomerang, Stiletto, Bombshell, Speed Demon, Backlash, Beetle, Hydro-Man & Constrictor! "The Hero Killers" — Part 3 of 3.
WHAT THE — ?! #20 1.25
Lopresti, Fisch, Tyler, Dutter, Costanza, Lobdell, Staton
A special "Infinity War" crossover issue!

COMING ATTRACTIONS CROSS-REFERENCE GUIDE

"The Hero Killers":
AMAZING SPIDER-MAN ANNUAL #26
SPECTACULAR SPIDER-MAN ANNUAL #12
WEB OF SPIDER-MAN ANNUAL #8
NEW WARRIORS ANNUAL #2

"Rise of the Midnight Sons":
GHOST RIDER #28
SPIRITS OF VENGEANCE #1

"Dead Man's Hand":
DAREDEVIL #307
NOMAD #4
PUNISHER WAR JOURNAL #45

"Infinity War":
ALPHA FLIGHT #111
DR. STRANGE #44
FANTASTIC FOUR #367
GUARDIANS OF THE GALAXY #27
MOON KNIGHT #41
QUASAR #47
SILVER SURFER #69

CELEBRATING 30 YEARS OF SPIDER-MAN

BY DARREN AUCK

JUNE

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
LUKE CAGE, HERO FOR HIRE #1 1972				HAPPY BIRTHDAY JOE RUBINSTEIN		
1		2	3	4		
LARRY HAMA	MIKE HIGGINS RITA SMOLINSKI	PAMELA RUTT	CHARLES VESS	MARY JANE'S FIRST APPEARANCE, SPIDER-MAN #25, 1965		
7	8		10	11		
	DON McGREGOR ROSS ANDRU	DAN CUDDY	NEW THIS MONTH: PUNISHER SUMMER SPECIAL	MARK GRUENWALD	NEW THIS MONTH: SPIRITS OF VENGEANCE #1	
14 FLAG DAY	15	16		18		
23 FATHER'S DAY	ARMANDO GIL 22	NEW THIS MONTH: SAVAGE SWORD OF CONAN #200	NEW THIS MONTH: THOR #450 24	TOM DeFALCO 26	STEVE BUNCHE 27	
NEW THIS MONTH: MARVEL SWIMSUIT SPECIAL						
30						

. . . WITH GREAT POWER THERE MUST ALSO COME - - GREAT RESPONSIBILITY!